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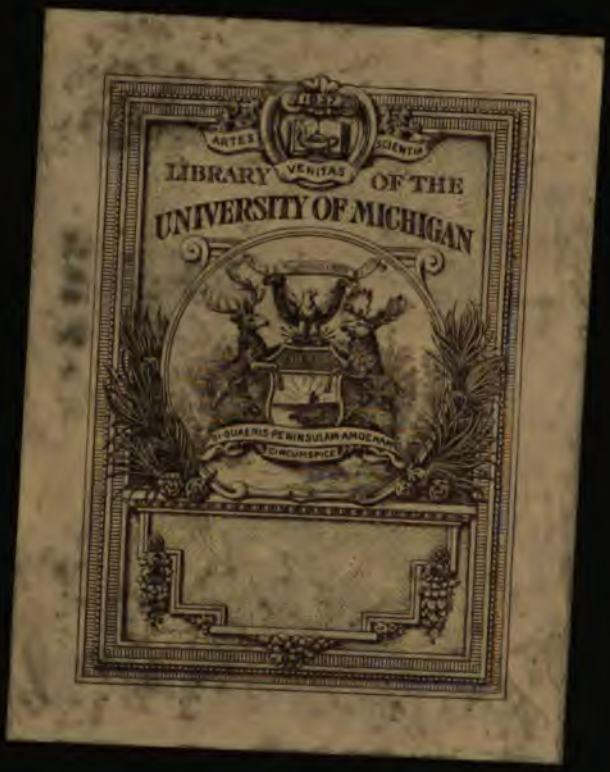
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THE

THEOLOGICAL WORKS

OF

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

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Cambridge:
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AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

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THE

THEOLOGICAL WORKS

OF

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

Edited for the Syndics of the University Press

BY

THE REV. ALEXANDER NAPIER, M.A.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, VICAR OF HOLKHAM, NORFOLK.

VOLUME VII.

CONTAINING

AN EXPOSITION OF THE CREED; THE LORD'S PRAYER; THE DECALOGUE; THE DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

CAMBRIDGE:
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.
M.DCCC.LIX.

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THE BOOKSELLER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following short and practical Explication of the Creed (the Original Copy whereof being found in the late learned Archbishop Tillotson's study after his decease) was, among many other duplicate manuscripts of Dr. Barrow's Sermons, since printed at large in folio, overlooked by His Grace (as may be presumed), otherwise he would, no doubt, have published this short Exposition on the Creed, together with that on the Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, and Sacraments, as they now are in this volume; which is intimated in the foregoing Preface*, written by his Grace. I have therefore judged it convenient, lest the same should be thought spurious, to preserve the copy thereof in my custody, writ by Dr. Barrow's own hand, where any one that pleases may see it, and be satisfied. Which being a sufficient testimony that this work is genuine, I shall say no more, but acquaint the Reader, that the same Author's Expositions on the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Sacraments, being out of print, it was thought convenient to publish them herewith, and to draw them into as small a compass as possible, that they might thereby become of more general use to the public; especially at this time, when the gross Error of Socinus does so much prevail: the said Error being in this Book most clearly refuted from the Writings of the Orthodox in the most Primitive times.

And how useful a work of this learned Author will be for the suppressing the pernicious Principles of those Heretics, which have let in upon us a deluge of Deism and Atheism together, is left to the impartial Reader to judge.

B. AYLMER.

* [Subjoined in this Edition.]

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TO THE READER.

AMONG the Remains of this pious and learned Author, fit to be communicated to the Public, none more likely to be of general use and advantage than this Explication of the Lord's Prayer, the Decalogue, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments; whether we regard the brevity and plainness, or the admirable weight and fulness of it. And therefore I thought fit to publish it in a small Manual, by itself, and not to join it with other Discourses of the Author, that so this little Treatise, which is so necessary and useful to all, might be had upon the easiest terms.

It were to be wished, that the Creed also had been explained by him in the same manner; but that he hath handled in a larger way, in a great many excellent Sermons upon the several Articles of it, wherein he hath not only explained and confirmed the great Doctrines of our Religion, but likewise shewn what influence every Article of our Faith ought to have upon our practice. These Discourses will make a very considerable Treatise, which will in due time be made public. In the mean time enjoy and make use of this.

JO. TILLOTSON.

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A

BRIEF EXPOSITION

OF

THE CREED

THE

LORD'S PRAYER

AND

THE DECALOGUE

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

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AN EXPOSITION

ON THE CREED.

THE order prescribed to this exercise directs us to treat upon, first, The Creed; secondly, The Lord's Prayer; thirdly, The Decalogue; fourthly, The Sacraments; fifthly, The Power of the Keys.

The first comprehends the main principles of our Religion, (I mean the Christian, as distinguished from all other Religions,) with especial respect to which our practice is also to be regulated. The second directs us in the principal duty of our Religion, (and which procures grace and ability to perform the rest,) our devotion toward God, informing us concerning both the matter and manner thereof. The third is a compendious body, as it were, of Law, according to which we are bound to order our practice and conversation, both toward God and man; containing the chief of those perpetual and immutable laws of God, to which our obedience is indispensably due: and unto which all other rules of moral duty are well reducible. The next place is fitly allotted to those positive ordinances, or mystical rites, instituted by God for the ornament and advantage of our Religion; the which we are obliged with devotion and edification

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of ourselves to observe, and therefore should understand the signification and use of them. Lastly, because God hath ordered Christians (for mutual assistance and edification) to live in society together, and accordingly hath appointed differences of office and degree among them, assigning to each suitable privileges and duties, it is requisite we consider this point also, that we may know how to behave ourselves towards each other, as duty requires, respectively according to our stations in the Church, or as members of that Christian society. Such, in brief, may be the reason of the method prescribed to these discourses, the which, God willing, we purpose to follow.

That, in the primitive Churches, those who being of age (after previous instruction, and some trial of their conversation) were received into entire communion of the Church, and admitted to Baptism, were required to make open profession of their being persuaded of the truth of Christianity, and their being resolved to live according thereto; and that this profession was made by way of answer to certain interrogatories propounded to them, is evident by frequent and obvious testimonies of the most ancient ecclesiastical writers; and St Peter himself seems to allude to this custom, when he saith that *Baptism saves us,* (conduces to our salvation,) as being ἐπερώτημα ἀγαθῆς συνειδήσεως, the stipulation, freely and sincerely, *bona fide,* or with a good conscience, made by us, then when we solemnly did yield our consent and promise to what the Church, in God's behalf, did demand of us to believe and

1 Pet. iii. 21.

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undertake. I conceive also, that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews doth allude to the same practice, when he thus exhorts to perseverance; *Having had our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water;* (that is, having received Baptism;) *let us hold fast the profession of our faith* (that which we at our baptism did make) *without wavering,* (or declining from it;) *for he that did promise is faithful:* God will be true to his part, and perform what he then promised of mercy and grace to us. Some resemblance of which practice we have in that passage between Philip the deacon and the Ethiopian eunuch: where, after Philip had instructed the eunuch, the eunuch first speaks; *Behold water; what hinders me from being baptized?* Philip answers, *If thou believest with all thy heart, it is lawful:* the eunuch replies; *I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God:* upon which short confession of his faith he is baptized. Now that this profession, (take it either for the action, or the entire *res gesta;* or for the form, or for the matter thereof; to all which indifferently, by metonymical schemes of speech, the same words are usually in such cases applied,) that this profession, I say, was very anciently (in the Roman especially, and some other Churches) called *Symbolum,* appears by those remarkable words of Cyprian (the most ancient, perhaps, wherein this word is found applied to this matter) in his seventy-sixth Epistle *ad Magnum,* arguing against the validity of Baptism administered by heretics and schismatics, (such as were the Novatians;) *Quod si aliquis illud opponit, ut dicat, eandem Novatianum legem tenere, quam Catholica Ecclesia teneat, eodem*

Heb. x. 22, 23.

Acts viii. 36.

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symbolo quo et nos baptizare, eundem nosse Deum Patrem, eundem Filium Christum, eundem Spiritum Sanctum, ac propter hoc usurpare eam potestatem baptizandi posse, quod videatur in interrogatione Baptismi a nobis non discrepare, sciat quisquis hoc opponendum putat, primum non esse unam nobis et schismaticis symboli legem, neque eandem interrogationem[a]*:* where those expressions, *eodem symbolo baptizare,* and *in interrogatione Baptismi non discrepare;* as also, *una symboli lex,* and *eadem interrogatio,* do seem to mean the same thing. And in other later writers the same manner of speaking doth sometimes occur; as when Hilary thus prays; *Conserva—hanc conscientiæ meæ vocem: ut quod in regenerationis meæ symbolo, baptizatus in Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto, professus sum, semper obtineam*[b]*:* where *regenerationis suæ symbolum* doth seem to import, that contestation of his faith, which he solemnly made at his Baptism. Now the reason why this profession was so called may seem to be, for that it was a solemn signification of his embracing the doctrine and law of Christ; even as Aristotle calls words, *σύμβολα τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων*[c], *The symbols* or *representations of the conceptions that are in the mind:* this seems to be the most simple reason of this term being so used: but if the simplicity of this notion doth not satisfy, there is another very agreeable to the nature of the thing, not wanting the countenance of some good authority. The word *συμβάλλω* doth in the best Greek writers[d] not uncommonly signify, to

[a] [Opp. p. 154.] [b] De Trin. XII. [Opp. col. 1144 B.]

[c] [*Ὥστε εἴπερ ἐπὶ δόξης οὕτως ἔχει, εἰσὶ δὲ αἱ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ καταφάσεις καὶ ἀποφάσεις σύμβολα τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ.*—De Interp. XIV. 14.]

[d] Plato, Demosthenes, &c.

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transact commerce, to make contract, to agree about any bargain or business; and the word *συμβόλαιον* (thence derived) doth, according to most common use, denote any contract or covenant made between two parties: now, that the stipulation made between a person by Baptism initiated and received into Christianity, and God Almighty, (or the Church in his behalf,) may most appositely be called a covenant or contract, none, I suppose, will doubt; wherein we confess faith, and promise obedience; God vouchsafes present mercy, promises grace and future reward: and that the word *σύμβολον* should hence import thus much, we cannot much wonder, if we have observed how commonly words are wont to borrow signification from their kindred and neighbours: and thus Chrysologus plainly interprets the meaning of the word; *Placitum, vel pactum,* saith he, *quod lucri spes venientis continet: vel futuri symbolum nuncupari etiam contractu docemur humano: quod tamen symbolum inter duos firmat semper geminata conscriptio—inter Deum vero et homines symbolum fidei sola fide firmatur*[e]; and commonly (in his sermons upon this Creed) he styles it *pactum fidei*. Ruffinus, indeed, tells us,

[e] Serm. LXII. [p. 190 D. Lutet. 1623.]

[f] [Indicium autem vel signum idcirco dicitur: quia illo tempore sicut et Paulus Apostolus dicit, et in Actis Apostolorum refertur, multi ex circumcisis Judæis simulabant se esse Apostolos Christi—nominantes quidem Christum sed non integris traditionum lineis nunciantes. Idcirco ergo istud indicium posuere, per quod agnosceretur is, qui Christum vere secundum Apostolicas regulas prædicaret. Denique et in bellis civilibus hoc observari fertur: quoniam et armorum habitus par, et sonus vocis idem, et mos unus est, atque eadem instituta bellandi, ne qua doli subreptio fiat, symbola discreta unusquisque dux suis militibus tradit, &c.—Expos. in Symb. Apost.]

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(and divers[g] after him,) that the reason why this Creed was called *symbolum,* or *indicium,* is, because it was devised as a mark to distinguish the genuine teachers of the Christian doctrine from such false teachers as did adulterate or corrupt it; or because it was a kind of military token, [cognizance] (a badge, as it were, or a watch-word,) by which the true friends of Christianity might be discriminated and discerned from the enemies thereof. But if we consider the brevity and simplicity of the ancient forms, unsuitable to such a design, it may seem more probable, that it was intended, not so much to separate Christians from each other, as to distinguish them from all of other Religions; or more simply, as we said, to be a mark, whereby the person converted to Christianity did signify, that he did sincerely embrace it, consenting to the capital doctrines thereof, and engaging obedience to its laws. Indeed, afterward, when it was commonly observed, that almost any kind of heretics, without evident repugnance to their particular opinions, could conform to those short and general forms, to exclude, or prevent compliance with them, occasion was taken to enlarge the ancient forms, or to frame new ones, more full and explicit, to be used, as formerly, at Baptism. But (to leave further consideration of the name, and to pursue what more concerns the thing) for the more ancient forms, wherein the foremen-

[g] Maximus Taurinensis. [Beati Apostoli—exemplum sequentes Ecclesiæ Dei—mysterium Symboli tradiderunt, ut quia sub uno Christi nomine credentium erat futura diversitas, signaculum Symboli inter fideles perfidosque secerneret.—Hom. de Expos. Symb. Max. Bibl. Vet. Pat. Tom. VI. p. 42 G.]

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tioned profession was conceived, it seems, that in several places and times they did somewhat vary, receiving alteration and increase, according to the discretion of those who did preside in each Church[h]; the principal however and more substantial parts (which had especial direction and authority from the words and practice of our Saviour and his Apostles) being everywhere and at all times retained; those, namely, which concerned the Persons of the Holy Trinity, and the great promises of the Gospel; remission of sins, to be ministered here by the Church; and eternal life, to be conferred hereafter by God upon those who had constantly believed and obeyed the Gospel. That in the more ancient times there was no one form, generally fixed and agreed upon, (to omit other arguments that persuade it,) is hence probable, for that the most learned and generally knowing persons of those times, when in their apologies against disbelievers for Christianity, or in their assertions of its genuine principles and doctrines against misbelievers, they by the nature and sequel of their discourse are engaged to sum up the principal doctrines of our Religion, they do not yet (as reason did require, and they could hardly have avoided doing, had there been any such constantly and universally settled or avowed form) allege any such; but rather from their own observation of the common sense agreed upon, and in their own expression, set down those main doctrines, wherein the chief Churches did consent; as may be seen by divers

[h] His additur *indivisibilem* et *impassibilem*: sciendum quod duo illi sermones in Ecclesiæ Romanæ Symbolo non habentur: constat apud nos additos, hæreseos causa Sabellii, &c.—Ruff. ut supra.

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of them, especially by Tertullian[1], (the oldest of the Latins,) if we compare several places, wherein he delivers the Rule of Faith, (as he constantly calls it, that is, such a summary of Christian principles, by which the truth of doctrines concerning matters therein touched might be examined;) wherein, I say, he delivers such rules of faith, to the same purpose in sense, but in language somewhat different, yet never referring us to any standing and more authentic form. Among these forms, that which now passes under the title of the Apostles' Creed (about which we discourse) seems to have been peculiar to the Roman church, and that very anciently, (as to the chief articles thereof; for it appears that in process of time it hath been somewhat altered, especially by addition;) and because it had been used from such antiquity, that its original composition and use were not known, was presumed to have derived from the Apostles, the first planters of that Church, (as it was then usual to repute all immemorial customs to be deduced from apostolical tradition;) or possibly because the Roman Church (as in common belief founded by the two great Apostles Peter and Paul,) was by way of excellency called the apostolical church; and the succession of Roman bishops, *Sedes apostolica:* so whatever belonged to that Church obtained the same denomination; and among the rest, the Roman symbol might for that reason be called *Symbolum apostolicum;* that is, *Symbolum ecclesiæ apostolicæ.* For that it was compiled by joint advice, or by particular contributions of all the Apostles, is a

[1] De Virg. Vel. [cap. I. Opp. p. 173 A.] De Præscript. Hæret. [cap. XIII. p. 206 D.] Adv. Prax. [cap. II. p. 501 B.]

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conceit sustained by very weak grounds, and assailed by very strong objections: as, that a matter of so illustrious remarkableness, and of so great concernment, should be nowhere mentioned in the apostolic acts, nor by any authentic record attested; (and, indeed, had it been so testified, it must have attained canonical authority;) that it was not received by all Churches; and that those which used the substance thereof, were so bold therewith as to alter and enlarge it, are considerations ordinarily objected thereto: but that which most effectually, to my seeming, doth render such original thereof altogether uncertain, and doth amount almost to a demonstration against it; I mean against the truth, or, which is all one in matters of this nature, its certainty of being composed by the Apostles, is that which I before intimated; viz. that the most ancient (and those the most inquisitive and best seen in such matters) were either wholly ignorant, that such a form, pretending the Apostles for its authors, was extant, or did not accord to its pretence, or did not at all rely upon the authenticalness thereof; otherwise (as I before urged) it is hardly possible that they should not have in most direct and express manner alleged it, and used its authority against those wild heretics who impugned some points thereof. Nothing can be more evident, than such an argument (as it was more obvious than not to be taken notice of, so it) must needs carry a great strength and efficacy with it; and would have much more served their purpose, for convincing their adversaries, than a rule (of the same sense and import) collected from their own observation, and composed in their own expression;

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and that argument, which they so much insist upon, drawn from the common consent of the Apostolic Churches, could not have been more strongly enforced, (nor the ground thereof more clearly evidenced,) than by propounding the attestation of this form, if such an one there had been commonly received and acknowledged: and if they were ignorant or uncertain thereof, after-times could not be more skilful or sure in the point. I speak not this with intent to derogate from the reputation of this Creed, or to invalidate that authority, whereof it hath so long time stood possessed: for, as for the parts thereof, which were undoubtedly most ancient, the matter of them is so manifestly contained in the Scripture, and, supposing the truth of Christianity itself, they are so certain, that they need no other authority to support them, than what Christianity itself subsists upon; and for other points afterwards added, they cannot, by virtue of being inserted there, pretend to apostolic authority, but for their establishment must insist upon some other base. It is, in general, sufficient (that which we acknowledge) to beget a competent reverence thereto, that it was of so ancient use in the principal, and for long time (till ambition and avarice, and the consequences of general confusion, ignorance, corruption, overspreading the earth, did soil it) the fairest, perhaps, and most sober Church in the world; that it was, I say, in so illustrious a place, so near the Apostles' time, made and used, (and might thence seem probably to derive from some of them,) may conciliate much respect thereto: but yet since it is not thoroughly certain, that it was composed by any of them, nor hath

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obtained the same authority with their undoubted writings, whatever is therein contained must be explained according to and be proved by them; and cannot otherwise constrain our faith: and, indeed, divers authors of great credit acknowledge it to be collected out of the Scriptures; *Ista verba,* saith Augustin, *quæ audivistis* (speaking of this Creed) *per Scripturas sparsa sunt: sed inde collecta, et ad unum redacta*[k]. And another ancient writer; *De sacris omnimodo voluminibus quæ sunt credenda, sumamus; de quorum fonte Symboli ipsius series derivata consistit*[l]. Its authority therefore will at the second hand prove apostolical, its matter being drawn from the fountains of apostolical Scripture.

But so much shall suffice, for preface, concerning the title and other extrinsical adjuncts of the Creed.

As for the subject itself, it is a short system of Christian doctrine; comprising the chief principles of Christianity, as distinct from all other Religions, in a form (or manner of speech) suited for every singular person, thereby to declare his consent to that Religion; which to do, as it is especially befitting at Baptism, (when the person is solemnly admitted to the participation of the benefits and privileges of that Religion; and should therefore reasonably be required to profess, that he believes the truth thereof, and willingly undertakes to perform the conditions and duties belonging thereto,) so it cannot but be very convenient and useful at other times, and deserves to be a constant part of God's service; as both much tending to the honour

[k] [De Symb. Opp. Tom. VI. col. 547 B.]

[l] Paschasius de Spir. Sanc. Lib. I. cap. I. [Max. Bibl. Vet. Patr. Tom. VIII. p. 808 C.]

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of God, and conducing to private and public edification: we thereby glorify God, frequently confessing his truth, (the chief and highest points of his heavenly truth, by his goodness revealed unto us;) we remind ourselves of our duties and engagements to God; we satisfy the Church of our perseverance, and encourage our brethren to persist in the faith of Christ.

As for the interpretation thereof, I shall not otherwise determine or limit its sense, than by endeavouring to declare what is true in itself, and agreeable to the meaning of the words, wherein each article is expressed; proving such truth by any kind of suitable arguments that offer themselves; such as either the reason of the thing, or plain testimony of Holy Scripture, or general consent and tradition of the ancient Churches, founded by the Apostles, do afford. Proving, I say; for the Creed itself, (as we before discoursed,) not being endued with highest authority to enforce its doctrine, it must be confirmed by such other grounds as may be proved more immediately valid, and efficacious to convince or produce faith in men's minds. For faith itself is not an arbitrary act, nor an effect of blind necessity; (we cannot believe what we please, nor can be compelled to believe anything;) it is a result of judgment and choice, grounded upon reason of some kind, after deliberation and debate concerning the matter.

But more distinctly what the faith we profess to have, is, I will immediately inquire; addressing myself to the exposition of the first word, *I believe*, or *I believe in*. Before we proceed, we must remove a rub, which criticising upon the phrase hath

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put in our way. They give us a distinction between, *to believe a thing, to believe a person,* and *to believe upon a thing or person*[m]: for example, taking God for the object, there is, they say, a difference between *credere Deum, credere Deo,* and *credere in Deum. Credere Deum* doth import simply to believe God to be; *credere Deo,* is to believe God's word or promise, (to esteem him veracious;) *credere in Deum,* is to have a confidence in God, as able and willing to do us good, to rely upon his mercy and favour; to hope for help, comfort, or reward from him: the which, after St Augustin, the Schoolmen account an act of charity or love toward God, as may be seen in that late excellent exposition of the Creed; and in this last sense would some understand the faith here professed, because of the phrase, *I believe in:* but I briefly answer, that this phrase being derived immediately from the Greek of the New Testament, and the Greek therein imitating the Old Testament Hebrew, we must interpret the meaning thereof according to its use there, as that may best agree with the reason of the thing, and the design of the Creed here. Now in the said Greek and Hebrew, πιστεύειν εἰς, (or πιστεύειν ἐν, or πιστεύειν ἐπί, which import the same,) and בּ הֶאֱמִין, (*heemin be,*) are used to signify all kinds of faith, and are promiscuously applied to all kinds of objects: it is required, to believe not only in God and Christ, but in men also; in Moses, in the Prophets; as likewise in the works of God; in God's

Exod. xiv. 31; xix. 9. 2 Chron. xx. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 32.

[m] It comes from Augustine, the father of scholastic distinctions. [Aliud enim est credere illi, aliud credere illum, aliud credere in illum.—Serm. de Symb. Opp. Tom. VI. (App.) col. 279 A.]

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Ps. cxix. 66. Mark i. 15. commandments; in the Gospel. Whence in general it appears, that to believe in, hath not necessarily or constantly such a determinate sense, as the forementioned distinguishers pretend, but is capable of various meanings, as the different matters to which it is applied do require: to believe in Moses, (for example,) was not to confide in his power or goodness, but to believe him God's Prophet, and that his words were true; to believe in God's works, was to believe they came from God's power, and signified his providence over them; to believe in the commands of God, and the Gospel of Christ, was to take them for rules of life, and to expect due reward according to the promises or threatenings in them respectively pronounced to obedience or disobedience: in a word, we may observe, (and there be instances innumerable to confirm the observation,) that, in the New Testament, *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστὸν, εἰς Κύριον, εἰς ὄνομα Κυρίου*, and *πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Κυρίῳ, τῷ ὀνόματι Κυρίου*, do indifferently bear the same sense, both signifying no more, than being persuaded, that Jesus was the Christ the Son of God, such as he declared himself, and the Apostles preached him to be. Since therefore the phrase in itself may admit various senses, we may (with most reason and probability) take it here, according to the nature and design of the Creed; which is to be a short comprehension of such verities, which we profess our assent unto: it hath, I say, been always taken, (not directly for an exercise of our charity, or patience, or hope in God, or any other kind of devotion, but simply) for a confession of Christian principles and verities; and accordingly when I say,

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I believe in God Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth; it is most proper so to understand my meaning, as if I had said, *I believe there is one God; that he is Almighty; that he is Maker of heaven and earth:* and so of the rest: to confirm which interpretation, I shall only add, that anciently πιστεύειν εἰς was commonly applied to the Church, to the resurrection, to repentance, and remission of sins: many examples might be produced to that purpose: I shall only mention those words of Jerome; *Solemne est in lavacro post Trinitatis confessionem interrogare, Credis sanctam Ecclesiam*[n]*?* Which expression, according to the Schoolmen's interpretation of believing in, were not allowable.

So much for the general notion of belief; it is some kind of assent to the truths propounded in the Creed: but what kind particularly it is, that we may more clearly judge, we shall observe, that belief hath two acceptions most considerable; one, more general and popular; the other, more restrained and artificial: in its greatest latitude, and according to most common use, (as also according to its origination, from πέπεισται, by which it should import the effect of persuasion,) thus, I say, it signifies generally, being well persuaded, or yielding a strong assent unto the truth of any proposition; ἡ σφοδρὰ ὑπόληψις, (so we have it defined, agreeably to common use, in Aristotle's Topics[o];) that is, a vehement or strong opinion about a thing: and so it involves no formal respect to any particular kind of means or arguments productive of it; but may be begot by any means whatever. So we

[n] Con. Lucif. [Opp. Tom. IV. p. ii. col. 297.]
[o] Lib. IV. cap. 5. [10.]

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are said to believe what our sense represents, what good reason infers, what credible authority confirms unto us[p]. Whence in Rhetoric all sorts of probation (from what topic soever of reason deduced, upon whatever attestation grounded) are called πίστεις, by a metonymy, because they are apt to beget a persuasion concerning the cause maintained, its being good or bad, true or false. But according to a more restrained and artificial acception, (artificial I call it, because it is peculiar to men of art, and invented by the school, to the purpose of distinguishing such assent or persuasion into several kinds, whereof they make belief in one kind distinct from those others which are grounded upon experience, or appearance to sense; or upon rational inference, according to which acception,) belief doth precisely denote that kind of assent, which is grounded merely upon the authority (the dictate or testimony) of some person asserting, relating, or attesting to the truth of any matter propounded; the authority, I say, of some person: which implies two things; 1 That such a person hath, *de facto*, asserted or attested the matter; 2 That his qualifications be such, that his affirmation should in reason have an influence upon our minds, and incline them to consent; for that he is both able to inform us rightly, and willing to do it; is so wise, that he doth know; and so just, that he will speak according to his knowledge, and no otherwise. And this authority (which by reason of the author's qualities mentioned is called credible; that is, such, as in some measure is apt in a well-disposed understanding to beget such an assent to the truth of

[p] So Acts xvii. 31. πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν.

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what is deposed) is one kind of argument (distinct from those which are drawn from experience, or from principles of reason, before known or admitted by us) whereby persuasion concerning the truth of any proposition (concerning either matter of fact, or any doctrine) is produced in our minds: and according to the degrees of our assurance, either concerning the fact, that the author doth, indeed, assert the matter; or concerning the person's qualifications, (rendering his authority credible,) are the degrees of our belief proportioned; it is more strong and intense, or weak and remiss; we are confident or doubtful concerning the matter: if we plainly can perceive by our sense, or have great rational inducements to think, that such an assertion proceeds from such an author; and then by like evidence of experience or reason are moved to think him not liable himself to be deceived, nor disposed to deceive us, then we become strongly persuaded; believe firmly, in proportion to the validity of the said grounds.

It is now to be determined according to which of these two acceptions the belief we here profess is to be understood: and to my seeming, we should adequately mean, according to the first, the more general and vulgar notion: that, I say, we profess to be persuaded in our minds, concerning the truth of the propositions annexed, not implying our persuasion to be grounded upon only one kind of reason, that drawn from authority; but rather involving all reasons proper and effectual for the persuasion of all the points jointly, or of each singly taken. In this notion I understand the word, for these reasons.

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1 Upon a general consideration; because the ancient teachers of our Religion, both as being themselves men not seen in subtlety of speculation[q], nor versed in niceties of speech, (used by men of art and study,) and as designing chiefly to instruct the generality of men, (for the greatest part being simple and gross in conceit,) could not or would not use words otherwise than according to their most common and familiar acception. They did not employ *ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγους*, terms devised by human wisdom for extreme accuracy and distinction[r]; but expressed their conceptions in the most vulgar and best understood language.

1 Cor. ii. 4. 2 Pet. i. 16.

2 Because we find, that *de facto* the word *πιστεύειν* is used by them (in Scripture, I mean) according to this general notion; that is, so as to signify indifferently all kind of persuasion, having regard to the particular ground thereof. Thomas would not believe, that our Saviour was risen, except he discerned visible marks, distinguishing his person from others: he did so, and then believes: whereupon our Saviour saith, *Thou believest, because thou hast seen: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed:* we see, that faith may be grounded upon sense. And, *If I do not the works of my Father,* saith our Saviour, *believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works.* Our Saviour requires them not to rely upon his bare testimony concerning himself, but to consider rationally the quality of his works; and upon that to ground their faith: which kind of persuasion seems

John xx. 29.

John x. 37, 38.

[q] The very nation of the Jews no logicians.

[r] Devised too after their times; for this scholastical acception is not ancient.

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grounded rather upon principles of reason, than any authority. The devils, St James tells us, do believe there is one God: how so? because they know it by experience, rather than upon any relation or testimony given to them. And you know, *He that comes to God, must believe that he is;* that is, must be persuaded of God's existence, by arguments proper to enforce such assent. For I argue further,

James ii. 19.

Heb. xi. 6.

3 That the belief of the first and main article of this Creed, that there is a God, cannot be grounded only upon authority; human authority cannot alone suffice to prove so great a point; and Divine authority doth presuppose it: for how can we believe that God doth this or that; that he hath revealed his mind to us; that he teaches us so or so, before we believe that he is? The belief of the subject must precede the belief of any attribute or action belonging to it: the belief therefore of God's existence is properly grounded upon other arguments, beside authority. Yea, further,

4 The belief of other main points, not expressed indeed, but understood and supposed as the foundation of our believing all the other articles thereof, doth depend upon more than bare authority: as for instance, the belief of God's veracity, (taken most largely, as including his infallible wisdom, and his perfect sincerity or fidelity;) the truth of God's having actually revealed his mind to us by Jesus and his Apostles, and by all the Prophets before; (or the truth of Christianity itself in gross, as also of ancient Judaism:) the truth of the Holy Scriptures; the validity of general tradition and common consent of the Christian Churches instructed by the Apostles, so far as they may conduce to the pro-

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bation of any of these articles: these things, I say, we must be persuaded of, as grounds of our believing all the other articles, not immediately deducible from principles of reason: and yet none of these points can properly be grounded upon mere authority: to prove God is veracious because he saith so, or that revelation in general must be trusted from particular revelations, are *petitiones principii*, most inconclusive and ineffectual discourses. Spirits are to be tried, and revelations themselves are to be examined, before we can upon their word believe any particular doctrine avouched by them: this must be performed by use of our senses and of our reason; and therefore virtually and mediately the belief of whatever relies upon such foundations doth depend upon them, and not upon bare authority.

1 John iv. 1. Matt. vii. 15, 16.

5 I will add, lastly, that if we consider the manner how the faith of the first Christians was produced, we may, perhaps, also perceive, that even their faith was not merely founded upon authority, but relied partly upon principles of reason, taking in the assistance and attestation of sense. They that beheld the sincerity and innocency of our Saviour's conversation; the extraordinary wisdom and majesty of his discourses; the excellent goodness and holiness of his doctrine; the incomparably great and glorious power discovered in his miraculous works, (withal comparing the ancient prophecies concerning such a person to come with the characters and circumstances of his person,) were by these considerations persuaded, not merely by his own testimony; that our Saviour himself did not so much insist upon, but rather disclaimed it, as insufficient to beget faith; *If I witness of*

John v. 31.

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myself, my witness is not true; (not true; that is, not credible:) you were not obliged to accept my testimony as true, if it were not also accompanied with other convincing reasons. It was by such a syllogism as this, that believers did then argue themselves into faith upon our Saviour: He that is so qualified, (doth so live, so speak, so work; so admirably in himself, so agreeably to prophecies foregoing,) his pretences cannot reasonably be deemed false; it is just that we assent to his words: But we plainly see and experience Jesus to be so qualified, (so to live, to speak, to do:) Therefore it is just and reasonable we believe him. This kind of discourse did *de facto,* and of right it ought to produce faith, in those who came under the influence of it: the being convinced by it was the virtue of faith, shewing the ingenuity and discretion of those so wrought upon; and the not being convinced so, was the fault for which unbelievers were liable to just condemnation; *If I had not come, and spake to them, they had not had sin:* and, *If I had not done the works among them, which never any other man did, they had not had sin:* that is, If my doctrine had not been very good, and my discourse very reasonable; if my works had not discovered abundance of Divine grace and power attending them; had not both my words and works been very open and manifest to them; they had been excusable, as having no reasons cogent enough to persuade them; but now they deserve to be condemned for their unreasonable and perverse incredulity. And give me leave, by the way, to observe, that by the like syllogism it is, that faith may (and perhaps in duty should) be produced even in us

John xv. 22, 24.

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now. The major proposition is altogether the same: A person so qualified is credible; (this is a proposition of perpetual truth, evident to common sense, such as by all men of reason and ingenuity should be admitted: otherwise no message from heaven or testimony upon earth could be received.) The minor, Jesus was a person so qualified, was, indeed, evident to the senses of those with whom he conversed, (to such as were not blinded with evil prejudice, and wilfully disposed to mistake;) and will now appear as true to those, who shall with due care consider the reasons by which it may be persuaded: that it is attested by so many, and in all respects so credible histories, yet extant and legible by us; confirmed by so clear, so general, so constant a tradition; maintained by so wonderful circumstances of Providence; in a word, that it is evidenced by so many and so illustrious proofs, that no matter of fact had ever the like, none ever could have greater, to assure it.

Belief. Upon these and such like premises I embrace the more plain and simple notion of the word belief; meaning, when I say I believe, that I am in my mind fully convinced and persuaded of the truth of the propositions hereafter expressed, (or implied;) not excluding any objects there contained under any formality, (either of being apparent to sense, or demonstrable by reason, or credible by any sort of testimony,) nor abstracting from any kind of reasons persuasive of their truth. I believe there is a God, the Creator of the world; that he is infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious; that he hath revealed his mind and will to mankind; as well for that good reason dictates these things unto me, as that the

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best authorities avow them. I believe that Jesus is the Christ, and our Lord, and the Son of God, because the Holy Scriptures do plainly so teach, and Apostolical tradition thereto consents: and in like manner of the rest.

I believe in God.

WHAT the phrase "I believe in" doth most properly here import, I did endeavour (the last time) somewhat to explain: I would have deduced some corollaries, and added some considerations preventive of mistake, and further explicative of that matter, if my intention hereafter to endeavour greater brevity did permit: but for that cause I proceed to the objects of our belief: whereof in the first place, as is meet, and in the front, God is placed[a]; the belief of whose existence is the foundation of all Religion, the support of all virtue, the principal article in all the creeds of all the world[b]. He that comes to God (whoever applies himself to any religious performance) must first of all be persuaded, that God is; as the object of his devotion and the rewarder of his obedience. For the explication of which, we will consider, 1 What it is that we are to believe; 2 Why and upon what grounds we should believe it.

[a] Primus est Deorum cultus Deos credere.—Sen. Ep. xcv. Deum colit qui novit.—Id. ibid.

[b] Ἕδρα καὶ βάσις ὑφεστῶσα κοινὴ πρὸς εὐσέβειαν.—Plut. [Amator. Opp. Tom. IX. p. 29. Ed. Reisk.]

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For the first: That in the world there are beings imperceptible to our senses, much superior to us in knowledge and power, that can perform works above, and contrary to, the course of nature, and concerning themselves sometime to do so for the interests of mankind; these qualifications and performances deserving extraordinary respect from us, hath been a constant opinion in all places and times: to which sort of beings some one general name hath been in all languages assigned, answering to that of God among us. Of such beings, that there is one, supreme and most excellent, incomparably surpassing in all those attributes of wisdom and power and goodness[c]; from whom the rest, and all things beside, have derived their beings, do depend upon, are sustained and governed by; the author, I say, of all being, and dispenser of all good; to whom consequently supreme love, reverence, and obedience is due; hath been also the general sense of the most ancient, most wise, and most noble nations among men; to whom therefore in a peculiar and eminent manner the title of God (and those which answer thereto) is appropriated: so that when the word is absolutely put, without any adjunct of limitation or diminution, he only is meant and understood: to which sometimes, for fuller declaration, are added the epithets of *Optimus, Maximus, Summus, Æternus, Omnipotens, Dominus,* and the like; *The Best, The Greatest, The Most High, The Eternal, The Almighty, The Sovereign God.* Thus, according to the common sense

[c] Φαμὲν δὲ τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον.—Arist. Metaph. XI. 7. Deus summum magnum, et forma, et ratione, et vi, et potestate, &c.—Tertull. advers. Marc. i. 3. [Opp. p. 367 A.]

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of mankind, is the word God understood; the notion thereof including especially these attributes and perfections of nature; supreme and incomprehensible wisdom, power, goodness, being the fountain and author, the upholder and governor of all things: and what is contracted with, or is consequent upon these; namely, the most excellent manner of being and of activity, eternity and immortality, independency and immutability, immensity and omnipresence, spirituality and indivisibility, incessant energy of the most excellent life, intuitive understanding, absolute freedom of will, perfect holiness and purity, justice, sincerity, veracity; as also complete happiness, (self-enjoyment and self-sufficiency;) glorious majesty, sovereign right of dominion; to which highest veneration and entire obedience is due. In short, whatever our mind can conceive of good, excellent, and honourable, that in the most transcendent degree is, by the consent of mankind, comprehended in the notion of God, absolutely taken, or in the last sense forementioned.

Neither doth Divine revelation commend any other notion thereof to us; but explains, amplifies, and confirms this; expressing more clearly and distinctly these attributes and perfections; with the manner of their being exerted, especially to our benefit; and determining our duty in relation to them.

Now that really such a Being doth exist (that this main principle of Religion is not a mere *postulatum*, or precarious supposition, which we must be beholden to any reasonable man for to grant us) I shall endeavour to prove briefly by three or

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four arguments, which are, indeed, of all most obvious, and suitable to every capacity, (for they be not grounded upon metaphysical subtlety, nor need any depth of speculation to apprehend them; common sense and experience will suffice to discover their force;) and yet of all that have been produced, they seem to me most forcible. The first is drawn from natural effects observable by every man; a second, from the common opinions and practices of mankind from all antiquity; a third, from particular discoveries of such a Divine power attested by History; a fourth, from every man's particular experience concerning a Divine Providence. And,

1- Natural effects.

I. I say, that natural effects do declare such a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good, from whence this visible world did proceed, and by which it subsists and is conserved; that it is

Jer. x. 12. true, which the Prophet Jeremiah saith, that *He hath made the earth by his power, hath established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion.* It may be assumed for a principle, which common experience suggests to us, that matter of itself doth not run into any order, &c. if not now, then not yesterday, nor from eternity: it must, therefore, by some counsel be digested. There is not, indeed, any kind of natural effect, which either singly taken, or as it stands related to the public, may not reasonably be supposed to contain some argument of this truth: we do not, indeed, discern the use and tendency of each particular effect; but of many, they are so plain and palpable, that we have reason to suppose them of the rest: even as of a person,

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whom we do plainly perceive frequently to act very wisely, at other times when we cannot discern the drift of his proceeding, we cannot but suppose, that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of: or as in an engine, consisting of many parts curiously compacted together, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how some parts conduce thereto, we have reason, although we either do not see them all, or cannot comprehend the immediate serviceableness of each, to think they all are some way or other subservient to the artist's designs. Such an agent is God, such an engine is this visible world: we can often discover evident marks of God's wisdom; some general uses of the world are very discernible, and how that many parts thereof do contribute to them, we may easily observe: and seeing the whole is compacted in a decent and constant order, we have reason to deem the like of the rest. Our incapacity to discover all doth not argue defect, but excess of the maker's wisdom; not too little in itself, but too great perfection in the work, in respect of our capacity. The most to us, observable piece of the universe, is the earth, upon which we dwell; which, that it was designed for the accommodation of living creatures, that are upon it, and principally of man, we cannot be ignorant or doubtful, if we be not so negligent or stupid, as to let pass unobserved those innumerable signs and arguments that shew it. If we look upon the frame of the animals themselves, what a number of admirable contrivances in each of them do appear for the sustenance, for the safety, for the pleasure, for the propagation,

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for grace and ornament, for all imaginable convenience, suitable to the kind and station of each! If we look about them, what variety and abundance of convenient provisions offer themselves even to a careless view, answerable to all their needs and all their desires! Wholesome and pleasant food, to maintain their life, yea, to gratify all their senses; fit shelter from offence, and safe refuge from dangers: all these things provided in sufficient plenty, and commodiously disposed, for such a vast number of creatures; not the least, most silly, weak, or contemptible creature, but we may see some care hath been had for its nourishment and comfort. What wonderful instincts are they endued with, for procuring and distinguishing of their food, for guarding themselves and their young from danger! But for man especially, a most liberal provision hath been made, to supply all his needs; to please all his appetites; to exercise, with profit and satisfaction, all his faculties; to content (I might say) his utmost curiosity: all things about him do minister (or may do so, if he will use the natural powers and instruments given him) to his preservation, ease, and delight[d]. The bowels of the earth yield him treasures of metals and minerals; quarries of stone and coal, serviceable to him for various uses[e]. The vilest and commonest stones he treadeth upon are not unprofitable. The surface of the earth, what variety of

[d] Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est; usque in delicias amamur.—Sen. de Benef. IV. 5. Vide locum optimum.

[e] Ut omnis rerum naturæ pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret. —Id. ibid.

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delicate fruits, herbs, and grains doth it afford, to nourish our bodies, and cheer our spirits, and please our tastes, and remedy our diseases! how many fragrant flowers, most beautiful and goodly in colour and shape, for the comfort of our smell and delight of our eyes! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood hath a quire of natural musicians, to entertain them with their sprightful melody! Every wood did I say? yes too, the woods, adorned with stately trees, yield pleasant spectacles to our sight, shelter from offences of weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our buildings, (our houses and shipping,) and other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary for the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance and maintaining of intercourse among us. Even the wide seas themselves serve us many ways: they are commodious for our traffic and commerce: they supply the bottles of heaven with water to refresh the earth: they are inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our springs and rivers are derived: they yield stores of good fish, and other conveniences of life. The very rude and disorderly winds do us no little service, in brushing and cleansing the air for our health; in driving forward our ships; in scattering and spreading about the clouds, those clouds which drop fatness upon Ps. lxv. 11. our grounds. As for our subjects the animals, it is not possible to reckon the manifold utilities we receive from them: how many ways they supply our needs, with pleasant food and convenient clothing; how they ease our labour; and how they

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promote even our sport and recreation. And are we not, not only very stupid, but very ungrateful, if we do not discern abundance of wisdom and goodness in the contrivance and ordering of all these things, so as thus to conspire for our good? Is it not reasonable, that we devoutly cry out with the Psalmist; *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: so is the wide and great sea, &c.* to say this grace with him; *The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season: thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing:* especially to say further; *Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*

Ps. civ. 24.

Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.

Ps. viii. 4, 6.

Can any man, endued with common sense, imagine, that such a body as any of us doth bear about him, so neatly composed, fitted to so many purposes of action, furnished with so many goodly and proper organs; that eye, by which we reach the stars, and in a moment have, as it were, all the world present to us; that ear, by which we so subtly distinguish the differences of sound, are sensible of so various harmony, have conveyed unto our minds the words and thoughts each of ~~other~~; that tongue, by which we so readily imitate those vast diversities of voice and tune, by which we communicate our minds with such ease and advantage; that hand, by which we perform so many admirable works, and which serves instead of a thousand instruments and weapons unto us;

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to omit those inward springs of motion, life, sense, imagination, memory, passion, with so stupendous curiosity contrived: can any reasonable man, I say, conceive, that so rare a piece, consisting of such parts, unexpressibly various, unconceivably curious, the want of any of which would discompose or destroy us; subservient to such excellent operations, incomparably surpassing all the works of the most exquisite art, that we could ever observe or conceive, be the product of blind chance; arise from fortuitous jumblings of matter; be effected without exceeding great wisdom, without most deep counsel and design? Might not the most excellent pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest pictures, the most useful engines, such as we are wont so much to admire and praise, much more easily happen to be without any skill or contrivance[f]? If we cannot allow these rude and gross imitations of nature to come of themselves, but will presently, so soon as we see them, acknowledge them the products of art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reasonable is it, that we believe the works of nature, so much more fine and accurate, to proceed from the like cause, though invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand? I am sure, the most diligent contemplators

[f] Archimedem arbitrantur plus valuisse in imitandis sphæræ conversionibus, quam naturam in efficiendis, &c.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. [II. 35.]

Si ergo meliora sunt ea, quæ natura, quam illa quæ arte perfecta sunt; nec ars efficit quicquam sine ratione; ne natura quidem rationis expers est habenda.—Id. ibid. [34.]

Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest? quæ sunt minus operosa, et multo quidem faciliora.—Id. ibid. [37.]

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of nature, and those of the most incredulous temper, and freest from any prejudice favourable to Religion, have not been able to deny, that abundance of counsel and wisdom discovers itself in the works of nature. Aristotle (whom no man surely takes for superstitious or partial to the interests of Religion) hath a whole chapter in his Physics to prove that nature works with design and for an end[g]: and otherwhere he affirms, ἡ φύσις ἕνεκά του πάντα ποιεῖ, *Nature doeth all things for some end*[h]: yea further, μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν, ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης: *Tending to an end, and endeavouring what is best, is more observable in the works of nature, than in those of art*[i]: this he speaketh in his books *De Partibus Animalium*, the consideration of which extorteth this confession from him: and if nature works so much for an end, there must be an understanding that intends it, and orders fit means for attaining it. Galen is observed in some places of his writings to speak somewhat irreligiously, yet in his books *De Usu Partium* he cannot forbear admiring the wisdom that shines forth in the structure of our bodies, breaking forth sometimes into hymns of praise and thankfulness to him that made it. The like expressions hath Cardan[k], such another not overdevout philosopher; and even our

[g] Phys. II. 3.

Ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν ἀλόγως, οὐδὲ μάτην ποιεῖ.—De Cœlo, II. 11.

Οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν καλῶν εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετά τινος τέχνης δημιουργούσης.—Plut. de Placitis P. I. 6. [Opp. Tom. IX. p. 485. Ed. Reisk.]

[h] De Part. Anim. II.

[i] De Part. Anim. I. 1.

Cujus (naturæ) solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. [II. 32.]

[k] De Variet. VII. 27, p. 283.

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own countryman Mr Hobbes, how little a friend he otherwise seems to Religion, and how ready soever to deride those that by reason endeavour to prove there is a God, yet being overcome by the evidence of the thing, hath somewhere let fall these words; *Itaque*, saith he, *ad sensus procedo: satis habens si hujusmodi res attigero tantum, plenius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui si machinas omnes tum generationis, tum nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen eas a mente aliqua conditas, ordinatasque ad sua quasque officia viderint, ipsi profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt*[l].

Neither doth the force of this argument subsist here, but, as we intimated, the correspondence and relation of outward things to our needs, appetites, and capacities, doth mightily confirm it: if we had organs of nutrition, and nothing to feed them; senses, and nothing to prove or please them; hands and feet, without means or cause to use them, we might have some reason to think these things made causelessly and vainly: but it is, we see, altogether otherwise; all things are accommodated for us, so that we could not wish or conceive better: which to them, who will not perversely dote, cannot but argue, not a wisdom only, but an exceeding benignity, careful and tender of our good[m].

[l] De Hom. cap. I.

[m] Quis enim hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget in his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus?—Cic. de Nat. Deor. [II. 38.]

Ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον.—Arist.

Ἀεί τε γὰρ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἄστρων, τὴν ὑπόγειον φορὰν ἐνεχθέντα, ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς.—Plut. de Plac. Phil. I. 6. [Opp. Tom. IX. p. 487. Ed. Reisk.]

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Thus much, the most common and obvious effects of nature here below, within us and about us, do signify to us: thus, as St Paul preached, *God hath not left himself unattested, οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν, doing good, sending us from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.* Nor do the heavens less declare the glory of God, and the firmament his handy-work[n]: he that shall consider with what regularity and what constancy those vast bodies perform their rapid motions[o]; what pleasure, comfort, and advantage their goodly light doth yield us; how necessary and profitable to us the vicissitudes of time and recourses of seasons are, which they make; how their influences conduce to the general welfare and preservation of things even here below, cannot but wonder, and wondering adore, that beneficent wisdom and power, that hath disposed and still preserves them in such order. Could they without a wise hand, by a casual running together of atoms, or whatever senseless matter, be so ordered, as for six thousand years together to persist in the same places, and retain the same periods of time, in their motion, without any sensible alteration? He that can think it, may think any thing, and it were in

Acts xiv. 17.

[n] Quid enim potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspeximus, cœlestiaque contemplati sumus, quam esse aliquod numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur?—Cic. de Nat. Deor. [II. 38.]

[o] An cum machinatione quadam moveri aliquid videmus, ut sphæram, ut horas, ut alia permulta; non dubitamus, quin illa opera sint rationis; cum autem impetum cœli admirabili cum celeritate moveri, vertique videamus, constantissime conficientem vicissitudines anniversarias, cum summa salute, et conservatione rerum omnium; dubitamus, quin ea non solum ratione fiant, sed etiam excellenti quadam divinaque ratione?—Id. ibid.

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vain to endeavour to confute him: how much more reasonable is that heathen philosopher, who thus speaks; *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam et eam suspiciendam, admirandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri*[p].

But this argument is infinite and inexhaustible; as full and pregnant as is the world of creatures: each of which is a wonder, and proclaims the incomprehensible wisdom, power, and goodness of its Maker to us[q]: we cannot without stopping our eyes exclude that light of Divine glory, which fills and illustrates the world; without stopping our ears we cannot but hear that universal shout (that real harmony of the spheres) which all creatures in heaven and earth consent in utterance to his praise[r]. Every star in heaven, every beast upon earth, every plant, every mineral, yea every stone; some in a language very loud and express, proclaim, others in a more still and low (yet to an attentive ear sufficiently audible and significant) strain do speak those most glorious properties of God; *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard; their accent is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world,* as the Psalmist sings. Τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, as St Paul speaks, *The cognoscibility of God, is*

Ps. xix. 3, 4.

Rom. i. 19.

[p] De Div. II. [72.]

[q] Omnes mundi partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, neque ad speciem pulchriores, &c.—De Nat. Deor. II. [34.]

.... Καλὸν ποίκιλμα τέκτονος σοφοῦ.—Eurip. [Critias] de Mundo, apud Plut. de Plac. I. 6. [Opp. Tom. IX. p. 486. Ed. Reisk.]

[r] Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c.—Sen. de Benef. IV. 8. [2.]

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manifest in and by them: and the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and divinity, are perceived by observing the makes or constitutions of the creatures in the world; as St Paul's words may be rendered, with which I conclude this argument.

2. General consent of mankind –

II. That there is a God, is proved by the general consent of mankind concerning it; by that *Testimonium*, as Lactantius speaks, *populorum atque gentium in una hac re non dissidentium*[s]; *That unanimous testimony of all people and nations not disagreeing in this only point.* If the authority of some particular men, agreeing in vote, of one city, of one nation, doth pass for an argument, and shews the thing probable, how can we decline or contemn the common suffrage of mankind? He had need have a very clear and strong reason for it, who will dare to dissent from all the world. Hear Seneca thus discoursing; *Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum. Apud nos veritatis argumentum est, aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam Deos esse, inter alia sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat*[t]: that is, *We are wont to attribute much to what all men presume; it is an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all: as that there be Gods, we hence collect, that all men have implanted in them an opinion concerning the Gods; neither is there any nation so*

[s] Lact. Inst. I. 2.

[t] Epist. CXVII. [5.]

Vid. Grot. de Verit. I. 16, p. 37; De Jure B. ac P. II. 20, 45.

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destitute of laws and manners, that it doth not believe there be some Gods.

In like manner Cicero; *Itaque inter omnes omnium gentium sententia constat; omnibus enim innatum est, et in animo quasi insculptum, esse Deos. Quales sint varium est: esse, nemo negat*[u]: *It is therefore an opinion manifest among all men of all nations, and, as it were, engraven in their minds, that there be Gods: how qualified they are, there is a difference; that they are, none denies.*

Even Nelleius, the Epicurean, in his disputation against creation and providence, yet acknowledges there are Gods, being compelled, as he saith, by this argument; *Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma consensio: intelligi necesse est, esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus. De quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est. Esse igitur Deos confitendum est, &c.*[x] *For since,* saith he, *not by any institution or custom or law this opinion is established, and among all (not excepting one) a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; because we have implanted, or rather inbred opinions of them. But about whatever thing all men naturally agree, that must needs be true; therefore we must confess there be Gods.*

Aristotle: Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸν ἀνωτάτω* τῷ θείῳ τόπον ἀποδιδόασι, καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες[y]: that is, *All men*

[u] De Nat. Deor. II. [4.]
[x] De Nat. Deor. I. [17.] Vid. Tusc. Quæst. I. [13.]
[y] De Cœlo, I. [3.]
* in heaven as opposed to earth.

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have an opinion concerning the Gods, and all men (both Barbarians and Greeks) do assign to the Divinity the highest place in the world, (viz. they believe his habitation to be in heaven).

The author of the book *De Mundo,* (attributed to Aristotle, and dedicated to Alexander the Great;) Ἀρχαῖος μὲν οὖν τις λόγος καὶ πάτριός ἐστι, πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ Θεοῦ ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν[z]: *There is then, indeed, a certain ancient saying, and familiar to all men, That from God all things, and by God all things subsist unto us.*

I allege these authorities, selected from many others producible to the same purpose, from the wisest heathens, (that is, from witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspected,) not only to strengthen the argument, but to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded; to whose testimony all histories both ancient and modern do consent.

Nor doth the force of this discourse rely merely upon the authority of mankind, thus consenting in opinion, (though that, as I said, is not contemptible,) but upon a much more solid foundation; and that is, upon the manner of this opinion, its being produced in men, and propagated. That men should so conspire, must necessarily proceed either from that such an opinion was put into them by nature, (by way of natural notion or instinct, as the first most evident principles of science, and the most powerful instincts (after what is good) are supposed innate,) at least a very near disposition to entertain and embrace it; or that some very

[z] Cap. VI.

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manifest and prevalent reason (obvious to all, even the most rude and barbarous) did beget this agreement in them; or that it was derived from some common tradition, some one common fountain of instruction to them. Be it which of these ways it will, that this opinion became so universally instilled into men's minds, the argument carries great weight and validity. If nature either plainly forces men, or strongly inclines them to this persuasion, it is a vain extravagancy to oppose it; but if it came (as most probably to my seeming it did) from primitive tradition, it argues mankind to have proceeded from one stock, from some one or few men at first gathered together; of whose original who could be more credible witnesses than themselves? If they did testify and teach their posterity that they came from God, why should we disbelieve them? especially seeing whence else should they come? Who should form their bodies, who should infuse their reasons, who should instil this very notion into them, we cannot well imagine; of themselves they could not be, (what such thing as a man did we ever observe, or can we conceive, to spring up of itself?) nor is there any other cause here, to which (without great fondness) we can attribute their original. It is true, that original tradition did by degrees over the world[a] (by the Devil's malice and man's infirmity or wickedness) degenerate into many shapes of polytheism and idolatry; but so was Judaism depraved by the Scribes; and Christianity itself hath been much debased by a long course of bad times; yet who doubts but they both derived from one pure

[a] Vid. Plat. Tim. [40 D.]

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instruction; that of Moses, and this of Christ our Lord? It is very observable what Aristotle hath concerning this matter, being spoken with so much judgment: *It was delivered by our ancestors,* saith he, *and the ancients, being left in a fabulous dress to posterity, that these are Gods, and that a Divinity contains all nature; but other things concerning Religion were fictitiously superinduced, for the inveigling of the vulgar, and for accommodation of laws, and the public utility. Hence they speak of them as of having human shape, or being like to other animals, and other things suitable to these, and agreeable to what is spoken; of which things, if we, making a separation, take only what was first delivered, that they thought the Gods the first substances, he may suppose it divinely spoken; seeing it is probable, every art and philosophy being invented, (as things would bear,) and afterward decayed, that such opinions as relics should be preserved even until now. The opinion of our fathers, and that which was derived from the first man, is therefore only thus far manifest unto us*[b]. So Aristotle expressly.

To confirm which discourse, (and to prevent further objections against it,) we may consider, that (however, perhaps, among some very barbarous nations this tradition may have been almost worn out by time and men's stupid negligence) yet the most ancient histories (that of Moses especially, the far most ancient of all, and in this matter to no man incredible) do attest, that this opinion was most universal, running in a most strong and clear

[b] Metaphys. XI. 8. [The passage is given in the original, Vol. v. p. 259.]

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current among the eastern people, the Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Egyptians; who that they were most ancient people, from whom the rest were propagated, the multitude of people, the antiquity of dominion, the use of letters, the rise of arts, the greater progress in all kind of civil culture, (all which things argue longer continuance in one place and state,) do plainly enough shew; whose consent therefore doth involve that of all men beside, and confirms this general opinion to rise from the clear spring of our first parents' instruction. I might add, the same manner of worshipping God, (by invocation, by consulting him in way of oracle, by consecrating temples and altars, by vows and dedications, by sacrifices and oblations,) which likewise men did anciently agree in, doth also argue, that all Religion did proceed from one simple original institution, or instruction common to all mankind. But I cannot insist upon and pursue every particularity.

III. A third argument of God's existence is from the discoveries of a Divine power in works that cannot be ascribed to any other cause visible or natural. Such are the prediction and presignification of future events[c]; (especially such as are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice;) curing the sick of great chronical distempers without any medicinal applications, restoring limbs to persons maimed, sight to the blind, and raising the dead to life; (a thing which Pliny[d] deems

[c] Vid. Cic. de Nat. Deor. II. 3.

[d] ..... Ne Deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere, quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis; nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos.—Nat. Hist. II. 7.

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impossible to God himself:) these and such like things all men will confess do surpass the power of any natural agent to effect, and are performable only by a cause whose power exceeds our comprehension. Now that such effects have been performed, we cannot deny, without belying the most credible records of history that are extant; without accusing all ages, not only of extreme folly and weak credulity, but of notorious forgery and imposture; without derogating from the common credit of mankind, and rendering all testimony, that can be yielded to matter of fact, ineffectual and insignificant; *Vetus opinio est* (saith Tully concerning prediction of future events) *jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque et populi Romani, et omnium hominum firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci* μαντικὴν *appellant, id est, præsensionem et scientiam rerum futurarum*[e]*: There is an ancient opinion until now drawn even from the heroical times,* (that is, from utmost antiquity,) *that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy,* (or, *inspiration,*) *that is, a presension and knowledge of future things*[f]*;* of which even the heathen story doth afford many instances, but the Holy Scriptures most evident and eminent ones: such as that to Abraham concerning his children's

Gen. xv. 13.

[e] De Divin. [I. 1, 1.]

[f] That the prediction of future events did belong only to the supreme God, even the heathens seemed to know and acknowledge. The wise poet, Æn. III. [250]:

Accipite ergo, animis atque hæc mea figite dicta:
Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando.

Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit a Jove cognoscere.—Servius.

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sojourning and being afflicted four hundred years in Egypt; of the prophet (some hundred years before) concerning Josias; of Isaiah concerning Cyrus; of Jeremiah concerning the duration of the captivity; of Daniel concerning the revolutions of empire in the world, wherein the achievements of Alexander and his successors are so expressly described. And for miraculous works, although all nations have had so many of them performed among them, as to beget a common opinion that God did frequently interpose, so as to alter the course of nature, yet the Holy Scriptures do most fully testify concerning them in great number, performed for the confirmation of Divine truth and discovery of God's will to men, for the relief and encouragement of good, the discouragement and chastisement of bad men; which are the proper causes in all reason why they should be performed; and why that testimony should not be received, there can no good reason be assigned; why it should, there is very great reason; upon which I did formerly touch, and cannot now stand to enlarge thereupon: and indeed God's patefaction of himself to mankind, (his speaking to the fathers in many ways, and lastly to all the world by his Son, sent on purpose from heaven to reveal his designs of mercy and favour to mankind,) accompanied with so many prodigious miracles, and so many glorious circumstances of providence, visible to all the world, and so accommodated, as in the first place to beget this belief in us, is an argument that cannot but in all honest and well-disposed minds obtain effect. To this head belong those opinions and testimonies of mankind concerning

1 Kings xiii. 2. Isai. xliv. 28, and xlv. 1. Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10. Dan. viii. 21.

Heb. i. 1.

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apparitions, of which the ancient world (their poets and historians) spake so much, all which probably could not be devised without ground; concerning the power of enchantment, [presignification by dreams,] to which some invisible power must co-operate; concerning conjuration, witchery, all intercourse and confederacy with bad spirits; which he that supposes to be all mere delusion must somewhat over-rudely and immodestly suspect the world of exceeding vanity and credulity, many worthy historians of inconsiderateness, &c., most lawmakers of great rashness and folly[g], most judicatories of indiscretion or cruelty, and too great a number of witnesses of extreme malice or madness; the truth and reality of which things being admitted, inferring the existence of invisible powers, (though inferior ones,) doth by consequence infer (at least confer much to) the belief of the Divine existence, removing the chief obstacles of incredulity. But I cannot further insist upon this point.

IV. The last argument I mentioned, was Divine providence: being of two sorts, general, in the government of mankind; particular in God's dealing with each single person. Although to him that will carefully attend and reflect upon it, (that, to use the Psalmist's and the Prophet's language, will *regard the work of the Lord, and consider the operation of his hands,*) even the general providence doth afford no small evidences of his existence; (he that shall observe the strange detections of mischief, both that which is designed, and that which hath been committed; the restraints,

Isai. v. 12. Ps. xxviii. 5.

[g] Vid. Grot. de Verit. I. 18; Tertull. de An. cap. XLVI. [Opp. p. 298.]

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disappointments, and exemplary punishments of oppression and injustice, and all wickedness, (when it grows outrageous and exorbitant;) the supports, encouragements, and seasonable vindications (often by unexpected means) of innocence and goodness; the maintenance of such rules and orders in the world, that notwithstanding the irregularity and violence of men's passions, they commonly shift to live tolerably in peace and safety; the so many poor, weak, and helpless people (among so many crafty, malicious, and greedy ones) being competently provided for; the reparations of good manners and piety being decayed and overborne by power and ill custom; these, I say, and other such occurrences in the world, he that shall consider wisely, may discern the hand of a wise and good Providence watching over human affairs;) but yet seeing commonly the reasons of God's proceedings with men here are various, mysterious, and secret, not to be distinctly apprehended by us; (who, for example, can certainly and easily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompensing the good[h]; between his just vengeance of one, and his paternal correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice, by either adverse or prosperous accidents, and his exercising the other's virtue by the like?) and because God's governance hath not its complete issue here[i], (this being not the only nor the chief place of reward or punishment,) therefore we

[h] Vid. Grot. de Verit. I 19, 20.

[i] This is a place, where God permits men to act much according to their freedom, not interposing but upon great reason, and they have here γνῶμα κρίσεως (Chrys.)

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cannot now with so clear evidence demonstrate the Divine attributes from general providence; but are here forced by perverse antagonists to be sometime on the defensive; being sufficiently able in this point to defend ourselves, but not so able hence to convince such sturdy adversaries: it is only the children of wisdom here, that will justify her[k]; therefore I wave that plea. But for particular providence, I dare appeal to most men, especially to those who have ever had any fear of God or sense of goodness, if sometime or other in their lives they have not in their needs (especially upon their addresses to God) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an indiscernible hand; if they have not, sometimes in an unaccountable manner, escaped grievous dangers; if they have not experienced, in performance of their duty and devotion toward God, a comfort extraordinary; if they cannot apply that of the Psalmist to some events of their life; *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: O taste and see that the Lord is good! O taste and see:* if God's goodness may be felt and seen by us, then is our own experience an argument of his existence: which indeed it is to all good men, (for whose comfort and confirmation I mention it;) though it is not likely to have much influence upon those that

Ps. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8.

[k] Indeed this opinion being not fixed steadily in men's persuasion, there can be no steady bottom of virtuous practice: no, nor to a wise man any comfortable life: τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κένῳ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κένῳ; saith that noble emperor nobly: τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίῳ συγκρίματι καὶ φύρμῳ τοιούτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν;—M. Ant. II. 11; VI. 10.

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have driven God's presence out of their souls; except they have so much ingenuity as to believe others' testimony, who assert this great truth to them from their own inward conscience and experience.

I have insisted too long upon this subject, it being so rich and copious, that I could not easily get out of it; nor can I much repent thereof, it being of so great consequence throughly to be persuaded of this point: the deeper and more strongly this foundation is laid, the more stable will the superstructure of religious practice be thereupon; and I fear most of that coldness and imperfection which appears therein, doth arise chiefly from the weakness of our faith in this very article.

I shall only further observe one or two particulars: first, that the preceding arguments, as they do most immediately evince those three principal attributes of God, his incomprehensible wisdom, power, and goodness; so, in conjunction with (or consequence from) them, they do declare those his other attributes, (which are ingredients also of that notion, which in the beginning of this Discourse I described,) namely, the eternity and indefectibility of his existence; his immense omnipresence; his spirituality: as also his justice and veracity; his rightful sovereignty of dominion, and the like; (for I cannot prosecute all the Divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction which our conceit and expression doth make of them:) if God made all things, he could not receive being from another, (and he who made this world, what reason can we have to suppose him from another?) nor can any thing receive being of itself; nor from mere nothing, of itself spring up into being: therefore the Maker of the world is eternal: something

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must be eternal, otherwise nothing could be at all; other things shew themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom and goodness of one; that one therefore is eternal; and so all nations consent; and so Revelation declares: that he is immortal and immutable, doth as plainly follow: for not depending for his being on any thing belonging to it, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation: having superior power to all things, as having conferred to all whatever of power they have, nothing can make any prevalent impression upon him, so as to destroy or alter any thing in him: from his making, and from his upholding, and from his governing all things, it follows that he was and is every where: where his power is, there his hand must be: for nothing can act upon what is distant; every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient: that he doth penetrate all things with his presence and power, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirituality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter, as all the things we feel and perceive do: his overreaching wisdom argues him incapable of being deceived; and his overbearing power shews, that he doth not need to deceive[1]; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive or injure any: from whence is consequent his perfect veracity and justice. The excellency of his nature; the eminency of his wisdom and power; the excess of his goodness; and his having first given being, and then preserving it to all things, do declare his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly that all love, esteem, worship, and obedience is due to

[1] *Ψευδηγορεῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταται στόμα τὸ θεῖον.*—Æsch. Prom. [1032.]

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him; according to that devout acknowledgment of the blessed elders in the Apocalypse; *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honour and the power,* (or *authority:*) *because thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are and were created.* Rev. iv. 11.

I might add, that the constitution of our own souls doth shew and confirm divers of God's attributes: it is not reasonable to think, that our Maker made us to admire other qualities than such as are in him: therefore since we love and esteem and admire goodness, mercifulness, &c. and dislike the opposites; therefore God is in the highest degree good and gracious, &c.

I observe, secondly, that in this article the unity of God is implied, (the authors of the Creed thought it sufficiently signified by the singular number;) the which in other ancient Creeds was expressed; *Orientis ecclesiæ omnes ita tradunt,* saith Ruffin[m]; *Credo in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem: All the Churches of the east thus express it; I believe in one God, the Father Almighty.* So in Irenæus's Creed it runs; *Ecclesia quaqua per universum orbem terrarum usque ad fines terræ dispersa ab apostolis et ipsorum discipulis fidem accepit, quæ est in unum Deum omnipotentem, qui fecit cœlum, et terram, et maria, et omnia quæ in eis sunt*[n]. And in all Tertullian's forms; *Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum*

[m] [Expos. in Symb. Apost.]

[n] [Verbatim—"Ecclesia, tametsi per universum orbem usque ad extremos terræ fines dispersa, fidem eam ab Apostolis eorumque discipulis acceptam, quæ est in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem, qui fecit cœlum, et terram, et mare, et omnia quæ in eis sunt."—Lib. I.]

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omnipotentem, mundi conditorem[o]. *Regula fidei qua creditur unum omnino Deum esse; nec alium præter mundi conditorem*[p]. And as in Irenæus' and Tertullian's forms, so it is also likewise expressed in the Nicene Creed afterwards. And this is a main point of our belief, distinguishing us from pagans and idolaters; who ascribed the incommunicable attributes of the one God, and imparted the religious veneration due only to him, unto false deities, invented by themselves, or suggested by bad spirits; thereby greatly wronging God and themselves: robbing him of his due honour, and themselves of that protection and aid, which God is ready to impart to them who faithfully serve and humbly invoke him.

Now this truth the precedent arguments do also manifestly enough infer: the uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony which appear in the constitution and conservation of things; their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly shew it: even as the lasting peace of a commonwealth (composed of different persons and humours) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; and the orderly march of an army shews it managed by one conduct; and the uniformity of a house, or of a city, declares it contrived by one architect.

And thereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for that there was one supreme God, the author and governor of the rest, (and of all other things,) transcending in power and wisdom and all kind of perfection, was evidently

[o] De Virg. Vel. [Cap. I. Opp. p. 173 A.]
[p] De Præscript. Hæret. [Cap. XIII. Opp. p. 206 D.]

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the common opinion[q]; whom therefore we see the poets do style, *The Father of gods and men; The King of the gods;* ὕψιστος, μέγιστος, κράτιστος; *The highest, greatest, most excellent God.*

Even the vulgar had this conceit: but the wisest of them had more clear and full apprehensions of this unity[r]; and commonly they speak of God, but as of one; so Plato refers the making of the world to one: whom he calls Πατέρα καὶ Ποιητήν[s]: and Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular number; and so do other philosophers; and sometime expressly they signify their opinion to be, that there is but one. *There are many popular gods, but one natural,* Antisthenes said in Tully[t]: εἷς δὲ ὢν πολυώνυμός ἐστι, saith the Author *De Mundo*[u]: *Being one in reality, he hath many names,* according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts: whom Seneca thus consents to; *Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare. Tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera. Hunc et Liberum Patrem, et Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri putant.—Sic hunc Naturam vocas, Fatum, Fortunam; omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potestate*[x].

Plato. Aristotle.

[q] Vid. Tertull. adv. Marc. I. 10. Major popularitas generis humani, &c.—[Opp. p. 370 c.]

[r] Vid. Grot. de Jure B. ac P. lib. II. 20. 45; De Verit. I. 16.

[s] [In Tim. 28 c.]

[t] De Nat. Deor. I. [13. 31. Antisthenes in eo libro, qui physicus inscribitur, populares Deos multos, naturalem unum esse dicens.]

[u] Cap. VII.

[x] De Benef. IV. [819.] Vid. Sophoclis dictum apud Grot. Excerpt. p. 149. Εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστὶν Θεός, &c.

Sed ne turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.—Marsil. Fic. in Arg. Lib. X. de Leg. [p. 941. Francof. 1602.]

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But Divine Revelation doth most fully declare this truth: I need not mention places; the whole Scripture doth chiefly teach and inculcate it: That there is but one Maker and one Governor of the world to whom all veneration and obedience is due; and to whom be all honour, and glory, and worship for ever ascribed and paid, &c. Amen.

It was anciently objected by Celsus, and other adversaries of our Religion, that Christianity did exact of men a blind, groundless belief[y]; that it condemned human wisdom, banished understanding, and prohibited all inquiry; commanding men to swallow its dictates without any previous examination or debate concerning the truth of them; imposing *νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, Laws uncapable of proof,* and inculcating this rule, *μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε: Do not examine, but only believe*[z].

The ground of this accusation seems to be a great mistake, proceeding from the not distinguishing that belief, whereby we embrace Christianity itself in general and in gross; and the belief, whereby we assent to the particular doctrines thereof, (especially such as concern matters supernatural, and above the reach of our understanding to find out or comprehend.)

As for the first, that faith, whereby we embrace Christianity in the gross, I say, that Christianity doth not propound itself as immediately evident, nor requires a precipitate assent to it; but offers reason for itself, and invites men to inquire, consider,

[y] *Ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν.*—Orig. con. Cels. [Lib. i. p. 9.]
[z] [Ibid. p. 8.]

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and judge about its truth: never any Religion was so little liable to this censure; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason: it desires of men an εὐγνώμων ἐξέτασις, a candid and discreet examination for its sake and their own: other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the example of ancestors, and custom of times; their large extent and prevalence among many people; their establishment by civil laws, and the countenance of secular power; (arguments extrinsic to the matter, and very weak in themselves,) declining all other test or trial of reason: and it is remarkable, how Celsus and those (who made the foresaid objection) did therein contradict themselves, when they affirm men ought, without scruple, to conform to the Religion prescribed by the laws of their country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest[a]: this is, indeed, an exacting of irrational belief; a stifling of our understandings and muzzling our judgment; a requiring of men to yield their consent to innumerable most palpable falsehoods and inconsistencies. The teachers and defenders of Christianity proceeded otherwise: confiding in the truth and reasonableness of their cause, they excited men to lay aside all unreasonable prejudices; to use their best understandings; to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: hear Lactantius speaking for the rest; *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam, et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro*

[a] Vid. Orig. con. Cels. Lib. v. p. 247, &c.

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virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere: that is; *We ought especially, every one of us, in that matter, which chiefly concerns our life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and weigh the truth, than, believing other men's errors, to be deceived as men void of reason: God hath given all men their share of wisdom, that they might both inquire into what they hear, and weigh it*[b]. So he disputing against the heathen credulity.

Thus doth Christianity call upon men to inquire into itself; yea it obliges them thereto: it propounds faith as a virtue highly commendable, (supposing it therefore voluntary and managed with reason;) for all virtue is ἕξις προαιρετικὴ μετ' ἀληθοῦς λόγου; it is ἑκούσιος συγκατάθεσις, a voluntary assent, promising ample rewards thereto; and infidelity it propounds as a vice very blameable, (and consequently very irrational,) threatening very severe punishments thereto: it doth not inveigle men by sleight, nor compel them by force; but fairly persuades them to embrace it: it doth not therefore avoid examination, nor disclaim the use of good reason; but seeks and procures the one, cheerfully and confidently appeals to the other.

Indeed, after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth and certainty of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial consent (without exception) to all its particular doctrines grounded upon them: when, I say, it hath propounded sufficient reason to satisfy men's minds, that it is grounded upon most solid

[b] Instit. Lib. II. cap. 7.

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principles, it then requires men to surcease further doubt or scruple concerning what it teaches: which is a most reasonable proceeding, and conformable to the method used in the strictest sciences: for the principles of any science being either demonstrated out of some higher science, or evidenced by fit examples and experiments to common sense, and being thence admitted, it is afterward unlawful and absurd to refuse the conclusions deduced from them: so it having been proved that our principles are true; (viz. that God is perfectly veracious; and that the Christian Religion did proceed from him, and is built upon his attestation;) it is a part of absurd levity and self-contradiction then to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein: and in this sense it is true, (and thus I take those Christians to be understood who commend immediate faith[c], and exclude reason from being busy in matters of Religion, and discountenance curious inquiry;) thus, I say, it is true, that Christianity engages us to believe, without reason or dispute. It will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an infidel to consider and judge of its truth; but it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant, as to question any particular of its doctrine: by doing so he renounces his faith, at least ceases to be a steady Christian.

Now the first principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other Religions) is, that there is one God: the next, (which also no Religion doth not acknowledge,) that God is perfectly veracious; or, that whatever appears to be asserted or attested to by God is certainly true: which two principles we

[c] Vid. Orig. con. Cels. Lib. I. p. 9.

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have already proved by reasons proper and sufficient, we conceive, to satisfy any well-disposed mind. A third principle is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine in general; that it hath been revealed and imposed upon mankind by Divine authority. And a fourth is, that those authorities and traditions upon which we ground, and by which we prove, (mediately or immediately,) the particular doctrines of Christianity to be truly such, (that is, admitting the former principle to have come from God,) are proper and sufficient to that purpose. These two latter principles involving matter of fact, and consequently being not evident in themselves, do (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe like reasonable men, not upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, (as Pagans and Mahometans, and other ignorant opinionists do,) as also to confirm the grounds upon which the subsequent articles or doctrines of faith are built, I shall endeavour briefly to shew the reasonableness of them; beginning with the first, and advancing my discourse by several steps or degrees. And

I. I observe, that it is reasonable to suppose, that God should sometime reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as they stand related toward him; (his nature and will; our state and duty;) his prime attributes persuade thus much. It is most evident to common experience, that mankind, being left to itself, (in matters of this nature especially,) is very insufficient to direct itself; it is apt to lie under a woful ignorance; to be

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possessed with vain conceit; to wander in doubt, and fall into error: it is subject to all kind of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtlety of naughty men, or the wildness of its own unruly passions and desires, can bring it under; and consequently it is liable to incur all those sins, (dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature,) and all those miseries, which from ignorance, error, and sin, do naturally spring; (an estrangement especially from God, and his grievous displeasure:) we see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits, those among men, who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise and rescue themselves from the common ignorance, mistakes, superstitions, and follies of the world, could by no means, in any good measure, attain their end: what did their diligent studies and inquiries produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irreconcilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainty, than at first? Most were plunged into a desperate scepticism, a doubt and diffidence of all things; none arrived higher, than some faint conjectures, or some unsteady opinions, concerning those matters of highest consequence: ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, They were, as St Paul observed, *made vain* (were frustrated and befooled) *in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened, &c. The world by wisdom did not know God:* could not attain to a requisite measure of knowledge in Divine things. This being the natural state of men, destitute of Divine help and

Rom. i. 21. Eph. iv. 17.

1 Cor. i. 21.

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direction, doth it not, I pray, greatly need another light to guide it in this darkness, a helpful hand to relieve it from these inconveniences? Can then that infinite goodness hear mankind groan under so lamentable oppressions, and not pity it? Can he behold his own dear offspring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless a distress, without affording some relief? Can such a spectacle delight that gracious eye? or can he forbear long to remove it out of his sight?

His goodness makes it highly improbable that he should: we account it great want of goodness, not to direct a bewildered traveller; not to relieve, if we can, a person greatly distressed: and if we, being bad, often perform such good offices to one another; how much more ready should we think him, that is goodness itself, to do the like, for all mankind so much needing it!

His wisdom also gives us to suppose the same: if God made the world to express his goodness and manifest his glory, is it likely he should suffer himself to be utterly frustrated in his design, by letting men continue in ignorance and doubt concerning who it was that made it, and how he governs it? Who but men can admire his excellent perfections, and render him his due honour; and how can they do it, without competent knowledge, and full persuasion concerning him? Doth not God expect duty and service from men? would he not have the world proceed in some good order? doth he not desire the good of men, and delight in their happiness? And then, being infinitely wise, must he not dispose fit means for accomplishing these ends? will he not provide,

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that himself be not totally disappointed? So his wisdom grounds an argument for Divine revelation: he had made an inward faculty of seeing in vain, if he had not given an outward light, &c.

God's justice also doth in some manner persuade the same: doth not every good governor take care, that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws? doth he not propound fit encouragements to obedience; and deter them from disobedience by menacing punishment? And the sovereign Governor and Judge of the world, can he fail sufficiently to declare his will? will he leave any apology for disobedience? shall he neglect any means apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty; fit to prevent the breach of his laws? If he loves righteousness, and desires to be duly obeyed, and delights in his subjects' good; he will surely discover his mind, and encourage men to comply with it, and terrify them from opposing it. Indeed, that God should for a while connive at men's ignorance, and suffer them to grope after truth, (as St Paul expresseth it in the 14th and 17th of the Acts,) to try them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves, in the using their talent of natural light; to make them sensible of their natural infirmity; more ready to embrace; more able to value the redress vouchsafed them; to commend his extraordinary grace and mercy to them; that for such purposes, unsearchable wholly by our shallow understanding, he should, I say, for some time forbear with a full evidence to declare all his mind, is not so strange or unlikely.

Acts xvii. 27, 30; xiv. 16.

Deut. viii. 15, 16. Exod. xvi. 4.

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I might add, that it is not likely God should suffer the world (his kingdom) perpetually to lie under the usurpation and tyranny of the Devil[d]; that his imperial throne should be possessed; his authority usurped; his name insulted and triumphed over, as it were, by that arch-rebel, and capital enemy of his. But that he should for ever suffer men to abide in such depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin and misery, seems not probable; and much less can it seem improbable that he hath done it: it cannot, I say, seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom, or justice of God[e], that he should shew them clearly, what he requires of them to do; what good he intends for them; what way leads to their happiness; and how they should avoid misery. This consideration, though it doth not fully prove God hath made such revelation, (for we cannot reach the utmost of possibilities, nor are judges of what God must needs do,) yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us to admit the following reasons: it being not unprobable, yea, in the reason of the thing, very probable, he should do it; we cannot wonder, and have less reason to distrust those arguments, by which it may appear that he hath done it.

II. We may consider, that no other Religion, that hath been, or now is, could (or can) with any probability pretend thus to have proceeded from God, or by him to have been designed for the general, complete, and perpetual instruction and obligation of mankind. There have been but three pretensions thereto; that of Paganism, of Maho-

[d] Καταδυναστευέσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου.—Acts x. 38.

[e] Vid. discursum Quintii Ciceronis in Lib. i. de Divin.

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metanism, and of Judaism: let us a little examine each of them.

As for Paganism, it was never one simple or certain, one fixed or constant thing; but, according to difference of place and time, infinitely various and mutable: diversely shaped and modelled, according to fancy and humour, design or interest, of the state that allowed it, the priests that managed it, or the people that received it; a plain sign, that (excepting some general confused notions, derived from ancient tradition) it did wholly proceed from human device, or some worse cause. Survey it all, and what shall you find, but a company of idle, ridiculous, ill-contrived, incredible, and inconsistent stories, arguing nothing of truth, and little of wit in them that invented them; these attended by practices most fond, lewd, and cruel, unworthy of human nature, contrary to common sense and honesty. Their worship directed to objects most improper: to the souls of dead men; (men famous for nothing so much as the vicious enormities of their lives, bloody cruelties, thefts, and rapines; murders and parricides; horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes, and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather detest and abominate, than respect or worship!) to brute beasts, and them the most vile and mischievous; (dogs, serpents, crocodiles;) which to pay devotion unto, what a debasement is it of human nature! to creatures inanimate; the stars and elements; rivers, trees, &c.; which we see acting by a natural necessity; yielding no signification of any life, sense, or understanding in them, and consequently much inferior to us in dignity of nature; which

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therefore it is a sottish baseness in us to adore: yea, which is yet an extremer degree (if it may be) of folly, they dedicated temples and offered sacrifices to things void of all subsistence; to mere qualities and accidents of things; the passions of our minds, and the diseases of our body, and accidents of our lives. Who would think men should be so mad as to reckon impudence, (that odious vice,) or a fever, (that tormenting disease,) or fortune, (that which we can so little trust, and so oft complain of,) among things venerable? And from such thorns, what fruits of good life and morality can we hope should spring? what piety towards God; what justice, truth, or goodness towards men; what sobriety or purity in men themselves can we expect should arise from such conceits and such practices in Religion? none other, than such as St Paul describes in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians; which history and experience shew to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. But it is needless to discourse against that, which I suppose hath no reasonable patron; and which hardly any wise man, when it was practised, did seriously think had any truth or reality in it: Plato often inveighs against the inventors of those fictions in Heathen Theology: Aristotle attributes the constitution of those Religions to the policy of lawgivers: there was no philosopher, who did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar opinions[f]; that is, of their Religion. What Tully saith of one part, the wiser sort of men did judge of all; *Tota res est*

[f] Arist. Metaph. XI. 8.

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inventa fallaciis, aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem; The whole business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake[g]. They did in their external carriage comply with common practice, out of politic discretion; for their safety, and for peace sake: but in their mind they believed nothing, nor liked anything in it: they observed the common things, *Tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata, (As commanded by the laws, not as acceptable to the gods,)* as Seneca speaks[h].

I might add, that all these Religions did vanish with the countenance of authority and power that sustained them; which shews they had no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those that professed them. It is therefore plain that this Religion did not proceed from God; but either from human device or diabolical suggestion.

As for Mahometanism, a sect in later times sprung up and vastly spread about the world; neither can that fairly pretend to a Divine original: in times of great disturbance and confusion in the world, (when even among Christians, ignorance and dissension, superstition and viciousness of manners had hugely prevailed,) in a very blind corner of the earth, among a crew of barbarous thieves and wild runagates, (such have those Arabians been always famed to be,) this sect did first arise; being accommodated to the genius of such people, and infused into them, partly by juggling pretences to wonder-working and prophecy, partly

[g] [De Div. II. 41.]

[h] Apud Aug. de Civ. Dei, VI. 10 [Opp. Tom. VII. col. 160 C]. Cf. iv. 32. [Ibid. col. 112 D.]

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by seditious violence; by a person not, as their own legends describe him, of any honourable qualities; but having all the characters of an impostor, (rebellious and perfidious, inhuman and cruel, lewd and lascivious;) propagated it was afterwards by rage and terror of arms, and grew wholly among barbarous people, void of learning and civility; having no Religion before, and therefore (as all mankind is naturally receptive of religious impressions) capable to admit any, especially such an one as this, agreeable to their savage humours and lusts; it subsists upon the same grounds of ignorance and force, refusing all examination, and upon extreme penalties prohibiting any dispute or controversy about its truth; being so far wise, as conscious to itself, that the letting in a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences would easily overthrow it. Even these exterior circumstances of its rise, growth, and continuance, (so full of iniquity and inhumanity,) are great presumptions against its Divinity, or rather plainly demonstrate, that it did not proceed from God; whose truth cannot need such courses, whose goodness abhors them: and if we look into it, we shall find it to be a lump of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies, compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian heresies, with some ingredients of Judaism and Paganism, confusedly jumbled and tempered together: from Christian heresies it hath its negative doctrines opposite to Christianity; for allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and his having really suffered; it rejects his true story, and affixes false ones upon him; that God hath a body and a

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human shape, (Mahomet felt his hand forsooth, and it was very cold,) an opinion so unreasonable and misbeseeming God, he might draw from the Anthropomorphites; and from the Manichees that doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events; a doctrine so prejudicial to Religion, taking away those foundations of justice between God and man; man's free choice in serving God, and God's free disposal of rewards to men, suitable to their actions. The Jew contributed his ceremonies of circumcision, and purgations by washing; his abstinence from swine's flesh; his allowance of polygamy and divorce. I might add, that from him it borrowed its inhuman condemning, despising, and hating all the world; calling all men dogs, (beside themselves,) and adjuring all to certain damnation; affirming withal, that all of their belief, how wickedly soever they have lived, shall at length partake of salvation. The pagan Elysium might be a pattern, whence their paradise of corporeal delight and brutish sensuality might be transcribed; which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to virtue; yea, how much it rather detracts from and discourages all performances of honesty and reason. He must be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded, that these conceits did come from the God of holiness and wisdom. And how Mahomet was inspired with truth, his stories alone would evince; stories patched out of old histories corrupted, mutilated, and transplaced, interlarded with fabulous legends; contrary to all probable records of history, (the persons, places, times, and all circumstances of which it most

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unskilfully confounds,) yea, repugnant to the nature of things, and to all imaginable possibility; evident arguments both of an ignorant and impudent impostor: he that will lie or blunder about matters of fact, who can trust him in matters of right and reason? All which (if time would permit, and it were worth the while) might by manifold instances be shewed. I might add its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue. But what is said doth enough declare this Religion to be of no Divine extraction.

Vid. Ps. lxxviii. 5; lxxvi. 1. Deut. iv. 7, &c.

As for ancient Judaism; that it has no such revelation as that we require, and did in the former conclusion assert, (nor has any probability to expect an universal, complete, standing revelation,) upon many scores may appear. It is from the tenor thereof evident, that it was designed only for one small nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; purposely distinguished, and, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind; and in effect so remaining for many ages until the Roman conquests opened the world and discovered them in a solitary obscurity; so that the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, and searchers into the customs of people, (Herodotus, for instance, and others,) could not discern them, did take no notice of them; though for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable. *He shewed,* saith the Psalmist, *his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye*

Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

Levit. xx. 26.

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should be mine, saith God to the Jews; and, *So shall we be separated,* saith Moses in his address to God, *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth: Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth:* and for this very purpose (of distinction and separation) many of their laws were appointed; *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people: ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean,* &c. We see the laws of that Religion particularly directed to that people; *Hear, O Israel,* being the usual compellation, set in the head of them: and, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt,* is the introduction to the very Decalogue itself: the encouragements also to, and discouragements from, obedience, do peculiarly appertain to them; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan, if they did obey; and dispossession or affliction therein, if they should presume to disobey; *You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye possess.* Such were the promises exciting to obedience; and the threatenings to disobedience suitable; as everywhere in their law and story is visible.

Exod. xxxiii. 16. Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2. Levit. xx. 24, 25. Deut. iv. 1; v. 1; vi. 3, &c. Exod. xx. 2. Deut. v. 33. Vid. Deut. vi. 3, &c.

This revelation therefore cannot be deemed general, such as we argued in reason might be expected from him, *Who,* as the Psalmist sings, *is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all*

Ps. cxlv. 9.

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Acts xvii. 26. *his works*; *Who hath made of one blood* πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, *the whole nation of mankind*, as St Paul in the Acts expresseth it; *Who*, as St Peter there
Acts x. 34. implies, *is no respecter of persons*, or of nations;
1 Tim. iv. 10; ii. 4. *Who is the Maker and Saviour of all men*, and,
Wisd. vi. 7; xi. 2, 23, &c. as the Wise Man tells us, *Careth for all alike*;
2 Pet. iii. 9. being desirous that *All men should be saved, and*
Tit. iii. 4. *come to the knowledge of the truth*; *not willing that*
Wisd. xi. 26. *any should perish, but that all men should come to*
Vid. Ezek. xviii. *repentance*; who is not φιλεβραῖος only, or φιλέλλην, (*a lover of Jews* only, or *Greeks*,) but φιλάνθρωπος, *a lover of men*, and φιλόψυχος, *a lover of souls*;
Rom. iii. 29. who, lastly, is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also: as not our Prophets and Apostles only tell us, but the reason of the thing, and the voice of nature doth declare[1].

And as this revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so neither did he in it speak out all his mind. Surveying this Religion, may we not easily descry a great redundance in the circumstantial and exterior parts; a great defect in the substantials and inwards thereof? Ritual institutions innumerable we see, nicely described, and strongly pressed; moral precepts more sparingly delivered, not so clearly explained, nor so fully urged by rational inducements: observation of times and
Col. ii. 21. places; distinction of meats and habits, (*Touch not, taste not, handle not*;) corporal cleansings and purgations; modalities of outward service in sacrifices
Heb. ix. 9, 10. and oblations, those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς, *Justifications of the flesh*, that could not perfect the observer's conscience, (or mind, or inward man,) most

[1] Οὐδεὶς θεὸς δύσνους ἀνθρώποις.—Plat. Theæt. [151 c.]

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largely and with extreme punctuality, some of them under heavy penalties (excision and extermination) enjoined; while moral duties and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and more pleasing to God) seem not so perfectly provided for. Many things are tacitly connived at, or plainly permitted to them, (as polygamy, divorce, some kind of revenge and uncharitableness,) which even natural reason dislikes or condemns: God's placability and aptness to forgive great sins, wilfully and presumptuously committed, (such as no man lives altogether free from,) not openly revealed, but rather the contrary expressed, (*Cursed is he that abides not in all things written in this law to do them:*) which excludes all assurance, and discourages from hope of mercy; and consequently obstructs repentance and amendment of life. And where do we see any clear discovery concerning the immortality of the soul, or the future state, so material a point of Religion, of so great moment to encourage virtue and piety? Even the Gentile Theology seems more express in this point, than the Jewish Law; and the Pagan priests (by help of ancient tradition) seem to have reached further than the Hebrew Prophets: God, indeed, seems to have shewed only his back-parts to Moses; when he discovered no more of his nature and his pleasure to him; when he seems to delight in, and lay so much stress upon, those carnal and ceremonious performances. Neither do we herein charge God; for he did herein but what wisdom required; the laws and institutions of this Religion were surely accommodated to the state and disposition and

Deut. xxvii. 26. Gal. iii. 10. Vid. Ezek. xx. 25.

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capacity of that people; people not very wise or considerate, grave or constant, meek or flexible; but a very stubborn, froward, humorous generation of men, as their own writings describe them; and therefore not capable of perfect instruction or rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and unruliness of passion, not οἰκεῖοι ἀκροᾶται, (no *proper auditors,*) of a pure and accurate discipline; and as with such, God in his wisdom and tender goodness seems to have dealt with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, and condescending to their mean capacities[k]; feeding them with milk, and indulging them innocent trifles; and so tempering his ordinances given unto them, as might best serve partly to please and humour them, partly to curb and re-
Gal. iv. 9; iv. 3; strain them: whence St Paul calls them *poor and weak elements,* and *elements of the world,* (such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn,) adapted to the learning and practising of children;
iii. 24. the Law being a schoolmaster, to keep them in order, and prepare them for a higher instruction. Such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish fancies, and content slavish spirits; but to men improved in reason, who could relish spiritual entertainments, they must needs seem burdensome and tedious: wise men cannot be much affected with pomps and solemnities. In the practice of virtue and piety there are alluring sweetnesses and beauties, which it must needs displease him, that is sensible of them, to be avoked from, by an obligation to attend precisely to such an abundance of outward sapless observances; to be

[k] Vid. Orig. adv. Cels. Lib. III. Cf. Grot. de Verit. v. 6.

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bound to chew such husks, neglecting so delicious a kernel, cannot but be irksome and grievous: they are therefore styled well in the New Testament an intolerable yoke and burden, and to be freed of them is a very valuable privilege, which Christ hath purchased for us. It is true, by degrees God imparted further manifestations of light even to that people, by the examples and instructions of holy men and Prophets sent among them, in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary[1]: holy men by their practice shewed that the rigour of the law might in some cases be relaxed and dispensed with; that a more spiritual service was acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion and a higher charity than the Law required. And the Prophets often declared, that God did not so much delight in ceremonious observances; but chiefly did require hearty piety, perfect justice, and tender charity; accompanied with meekness and patience, temperance and sobriety. By them also God discovered more of his gracious disposition and merciful intentions; that he could pardon the greatest sins, and was reconcilable to the most heinous offenders, upon sincere repentance and amendment of life. But these arbitrary and extraordinary dispensations of further light and instruction to the Jews do confirm our purpose, shewing that God did not primarily intend the Jewish Law for a complete discovery of his mind; having reserved so much to be discovered in fit opportunity, argues, that more still might be behind; as, indeed, we see that future life and

Acts xv. 10, 28. Gal. v. 1.

[1] Remission of sins not clearly discovered under the Jewish dispensation; a fundamental point of religion.

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immortality was not even by the Prophets quite
Heb.viii.6. brought to light; that better covenant, established upon better promises, was not yet revealed.

Yea, this Religion, as it was not universal and complete, so neither was it immutable and perpe-
Deut.xviii. 15. tual: itself tells us, that God hereafter would raise another Prophet, (for extraordinariness and eminency like to Moses,) which should have words by God put into his mouth, (new words, surely, new revelations from God,) whom they particularly
Jer. xxxi. 31. should be obliged to hear and obey: that the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon men's hearts: concerning which
Heb. viii. 7, 13. we may say with the Author to the Hebrews, *If the first had been* ἄμεμπτος, *faultless* and *perfect, there would have no place been found for the second:* and, by speaking of a new one, he antiquated the old one.

That another priesthood should infallibly be
Psal. cx. 4. established, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek; (not to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions).

Isai. lxvi. 18, 21. That time should be, when God would gather all nations and tongues; and they should come and see his glory; and out of them God would *take* (that which the Mosaical constitution would not permit) of them for priests and for Levites.

Ps. cxxxii. 13. Mic. iv. 1, 2, &c. Joel ii. 32; iii. 16. That there should be a Zion, a mountain seated above all mountains, wherein God would place his perpetual residence, (his seat of worship and government,) to which all nations should flow, to

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learn God's will and walk in his ways. (Which could not be Jerusalem, which is long since desolated; and which, if standing, could be no convenient resort for all the world; it is another spiritual Zion, a mystical rock is surely prophesied of.)

That God will create a new heaven and a new earth; (a wholly new world and state of things;) so that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind. Isai. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22.

That God would pour his spirit of prophecy upon all flesh, (though the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation;) that *The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;* (Judaism cannot be this knowledge, which was never likely to fill the earth). That *From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering.* (In every place incense shall be offered unto God, not only at Jerusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) For that a time was determined *To finish transgression, and make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy:* that is, in fine, that God would send the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; revealing God's will, and declaring his mercy to mankind; to erect an universal spiritual kingdom over men's hearts, reducing them to the knowledge and obedience of God. These things (to which I might add divers more) sufficiently shew that the Mosaical dispensation was but temporal

Joel ii. 28. Hab. ii. 14. Mal. i. 11. Dan. ix. 24.

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and changeable; and that that was intended by God to be done, which the Author of the Hebrews affirms done by Christ: an abrogation is made of the precedent command, for its weakness and unprofitableness[m], (its unprofitableness to the purposes of bringing men to such a spiritual sanctity which would please God;) which is another consideration, that shews the imperfection of the Jewish Religion. If Judaism could not dispose men to any tolerable degree of piety and righteousness acceptable to God, (that which St Paul so largely proves in the Epistle to the Romans,) if it also tenders no favour or pardon to those which had transgressed the law and offended God, (which he also there and otherwhere shews,) it was necessary, that either all men should lie under a desperate slavery to sin and guilt, or that God should discover another way of righteousness and mercy to be obtained.

Heb. vii. 18.

Rom. iii.

Gal. iii. &c.

That the Christian doctrine did proceed from God, is a principle upon which our faith of all particular articles in our Creed doth rely; the truth and reasonableness of which I began to shew, proceeding by some steps; whereof the first was, the probability that God should reveal such a doctrine for the benefit and direction of mankind; the second, that no other Religion can pretend to such a revelation: these assertions do well prepare our way to a third (which now we proceed to), that I might further consider how unsuitable the Jewish Religion was to the common nature and genius of mankind, and therefore unapt to prevail upon men's minds: *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidusque, (The Jewish way of Religion is uncouth and*

[m] Διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές.—Heb. vii. 18.

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sordid,) was Tacitus's censure[n]; but it agreed to the general conceit of men about it, at that time when it began to be commonly known and observed: and a Religion so little plausible or probable, (so apt to be disliked and despised,) it is not likely that God would commend to the generality of mankind. But I will not further insist upon this argument; but proceed to assert,

III. That the Christian doctrine is in all respects such as might become God to be the author of; worthy his wisdom and goodness to reveal and impose upon mankind. We cannot imagine a better, more clearly true, more full and exact; more satisfactory to our minds and to our wants: we have therein the nature and will of God plainly declared, so far as it is fit and useful for us to know them; together with our relations to him, and all the state of our own souls: an exact rule of life prescribed to us, with all fit helps and proper encouragements to the performance of our duty; the way of obtaining all the happiness we are capable of, and avoiding all misery, clearly set before us; all the darkness removed, the doubts resolved, the mistakes corrected, with which mankind, in those matters of highest concernment, hath been hitherto disturbed and distracted.

The Christian doctrine.

1 It assigns, I say, a true and lively character of God; true, because worthy of him; agreeable to whatever reason dictates, and the works of nature shew concerning him; ascribing all conceivable perfections to him in the highest degree, and asserting all his due rights and prerogatives; omniscient wisdom and almighty power; infinite benignity

[n] Hist. v. 5.

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and beneficency toward his creatures; supreme majesty and authority over all; having made all things with especial regard to man; and upholding them with the same gracious respect; and governing them with a particular care and providence; searching all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to a general (and ultimate) good end: this is the first excellency of our Religion, which is great, both as to the object and influence thereof. The ignorance of God's nature, or misconceptions about him, what mischief and what superstitions do they not produce in the worship of God! Christian Religion represents him in his essence one, perfectly simple, spiritual, omnipresent, eternal, impassible, and immutable; self-sufficient and infinitely happy: in his interior disposition of will, and in all his purposes absolutely free, pure, and holy; just, faithful, and constant: in all his dealings with rational creatures, as very careful and tender of their good; exceedingly gracious and merciful toward them; so in nowise fond or indulgent, but impartially just and severe against all iniquity, obstinately pursued and persisted in; most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his proceedings: it represents him compassionate of our evils; placable for our offences; accessible, and inclinable to help us in our needs. Thus, but with advantage beyond what I can express, it describes God to us, mixing nothing unworthy or misbecoming him, (as other Religions and doctrines may be observed to do;) adding nothing repugnant to what natural light discerns or approves, but shewing something beside and beyond what it can discover;

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concerning his incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence; his unsearchable counsels of wisdom; his admirable ways of providence; whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness and glorify his justice to us: which kind of truths, (exceeding the reach of human invention and capacity,) as it becomes God (so far transcending us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them, so they so wonderfully suiting to the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue the divinity of the doctrine that acquaints us with them. That God should send his Son out of his bosom, to partake our nature, and appear in our flesh; to manifest his will unto us; to set before us an exact pattern of holy life, (the most difficult parts especially thereof, humility and patience;) by his obedience and suffering to expiate our sin and reconcile God to mankind, is a mystery, indeed, and depth of goodness, which our reason cannot fathom, which we can better admire than understand: but neither can any reason contradict or disprove it: nothing can be incredible to us concerning that immense goodness, whose common care of us even in matters of ordinary providence is so wonderful and unaccountable, that the consideration thereof made Job and the Psalmist thus exclaim; *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!* Job vii. 17. Ps. cxliv. 3; viii. 4.

2 This doctrine also informs us concerning ourselves, and the state of our souls; concerning the nobleness of our extraction and the dignity of our nature, derived from God and resembling him; how

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we fell from our original felicity, and lapsed into this wretched blindness, error, and disorder of soul, into this state of frailty, sorrow, and misery, by our distrust and disobedience to God; how being thus estranged from God, and exposed to his wrathful displeasure, we may recover again his love and favour, and may, by returning to God and complying with his will, be reinstated in a happy condition, more happy far than that from which we fell; that our souls are immortal, (a point which the wisest men have so much disputed about, and doubted of; and in the certain decision of which they would have been so much satisfied,) and what its state shall be after its separation from this body, suited to its demeanour and demerits in this life; what a judgment and trial all our actions (even our most secret thoughts and words) must undergo after this life: these so important truths, so useful for the satisfaction of our minds and the direction of our lives, so conducible to the clearing of our notions, even concerning nature and the course of things in this world, this doctrine plainly shews us: and is it not in that respect worthy to come from God, who alone could teach and satisfy us in these things?

3 As for that rule of life it prescribes us, nothing can be more exactly agreeable to our reason, more perfective of our nature, more conducible either to the public good, or to our private content. What can be more just and reasonable, than all those duties of piety which it requires; than highest esteem and honour of him, which is most excellent; most hearty love and affection to him, who is in himself most good, towards us most beneficent;

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most awful fear of him, who is so powerful, so pure, so just and severe; gratitude to him, from whom we have received our being, and all our good things; trust and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever he hath promised, and whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness; all obedience and observance of him, whose children and servants and subjects we are born? Can there be a greater privilege, than liberty of access to him in our needs, who is alone able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants and asking for them? Is there a more equal or favourable kind of satisfaction for our offences, than confession, and repenting of them? Is it not fit we should endeavour to promote his glory, who hath been so careful of ours? The practice of such a piety cannot but produce excellent fruits, a joyful peace of conscience, a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrors and affrightments; and therefore is not our obligation to these duties most reasonable? And for our behaviour toward each other, what better directions can we have, than those which our Gospel affords us: that we cordially love one another, earnestly desire each other's good, pity all the evils of our brethren, be ready to afford them all the help and comfort we can, not limiting this our charity, but extending it to all, in imitation of God's boundless beneficence; that we should mutually bear infirmities, and pardon all injuries done us, not rendering evil for evil, but requiting evil with good; that we be just and honest in all our dealings, observant of all duties concerning our

Gal. vi. 10. Matt. v. 44.

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relations, diligent in our callings, peaceable and quiet in our stations, respective and obedient to our superiors, meek and gentle and courteous in our behaviour toward all men, rooting out all malice, wrath, envy, strife, animosity, ill suspicion out of our hearts, forbearing to revile, slander, detract, or rashly to censure any man. Now what great benefits is it not evident that the practice of such duties would bring forth! What mischiefs would it prevent! How sociable, and pleasant, and secure a life should we lead therein! What innumerable griefs and troubles, fears and suspicions, discomposures and distractions of mind at home; what dangers, tumults, confusions, and tragedies abroad, would it remove! This part therefore of our rule plainly deserves the impression of divine authority upon it. As for the precepts concerning the management of ourselves, our own souls and bodies; those which oblige us to be humble and modest, calm and serene, contented and patient, pure and chaste, sober and temperate, banishing all haughty conceits and vain opinions concerning ourselves, regulating our passions and restraining our appetites, moderating ourselves in all corporeal enjoyments, possessing our vessels in sanctity and honour, abstaining from all unlawful and irregular pleasures, (base in kind or excessive in degree,) which may corrupt our minds, or impair our healths, or disturb our quiet: it prohibits us not the use of any creature, whence we may receive any profit or delight, but indulges us a prudent and sober enjoyment of them all, with sense of God's goodness and thankfulness. And who sees not what benefit and convenience doth

1 Thess. iv. 4.

1 Tim. iv. 4.

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accrue to us from obeying such commands? In few words; *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are decent, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue or any praise,* those things the Christian doctrine enjoins us to regard and practise. And what other Religion, I pray, or what philosophy, hath so perfectly and clearly, with such consistence and with such confidence, taught us the like? If any have taught us some of them, (as it is no wonder if they should, since all of them are so plainly agreeable to good reason,) yet could none press them with such effectual inducements, nor enforce the practice of them upon so true and necessary grounds. Some philosophies have highly commended virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the ends are mean which they aim at, the grounds very weak from which they argue: present satisfaction and tranquillity of mind, safety, quiet, convenience, and pleasure of this life; can they persuade men easily that these are sufficient inducements so carefully and painfully to follow virtue? Doth that thing deserve such mighty eulogies, which hath no greater rewards or benefits than those attending it? No, surely. He that tells us, by doing these things we shall imitate the highest goodness, we shall honour God and please him, we shall perform a duty of gratitude to our great Benefactor, we shall obtain the love and favour of God, we shall avoid his wrath and displeasure, we shall acquire not only comfort and peace of conscience here, but an everlasting crown of joy and bliss hereafter; he propoundeth ends

Phil. iv. 8.

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infinitely more noble, he useth arguments incomparably most efficacious and persuasive to the practice of virtue. No philosophy in any measure represents virtue so truly upon all accounts estimable and eligible as this; none can discover the excellent fruits that grow upon it.

4 Neither doth this Religion only teach and persuade us to so excellent a way of life, but (what no other law or doctrine pretends to) it shews us the means, it affordeth us help and ability to practise it; (without which, such is the frailty of our nature, experience shews, that all instruction or exhortation whatever would signify little;) it is no dead letter, but hath a quickening spirit accompanying it; it sounds not only through the ear, but impresses itself upon the heart: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directs us to a sure oracle, where we may receive certain counsel and information: if our passions be turbulent, and our appetites outrageous; if temptation overbear us, it leadeth us thither, whence we may procure strength to resist and subdue them.

5 This doctrine, lastly, fully satisfies us about that inquiry which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much final irresolution hath exercised philosophers, wherein man's happiness consists, and what the means are to attain to it: that it doth not consist in any one of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all; but in the favour of God, and enjoyment of him, and in the blessings flowing thence; which happiness only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's commandments, a practice of that virtue and piety, (in most part before specified,) is obtainable. Such is the tenor of the Christian

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doctrine: these things it discovers and teaches, not with fine methods of artificial eloquence and subtilty, πειθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, the persuasive words of human wisdom, but with a majestic simplicity, confidence, and authority, with demonstration of spirit and power; such as becomes the Sovereign Lord to use, when he vouchsafes to declare his mind. I should have interposed this very material observation, that Christianity requires chiefly, and in a manner only, a rational and spiritual service, not clogged with multitude of external rites and observances; (those few it enjoins are plainly most reasonable, very decent and useful, fit to instruct us in and excite us to our duty;) which shews that this revelation is complete, suitable to the most adult age, the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But I must leave this point: and, I think, thus much may suffice to shew, that a doctrine so beneficial and satisfactory to mankind, so exceedingly beautiful and amiable, so agreeable to reason, and yet so much surpassing it, may well be supposed to have proceeded from divine authority and revelation: *Non vox hominem sonat;* the true tone and air of it sounds above the voice of man; its looks so much resemble the divine wisdom and goodness, one cannot think it had any other parent.

1 Cor. ii. 4. 2 Pet. i. 16.

To these abstracted considerations I add, (which is the last step of our discourse,)

IV. That *de facto,* in very deed, God hath asserted and attested to the Christian doctrine. God is himself invisible and indiscernible to our senses; neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence: it must be therefore

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by works supernatural and extraordinary (such as no creature can effect or counterfeit) that he must (if ever assuredly) signify his mind and purpose to us: and of such there is no kind of attestation needful or (perhaps) possible, which God hath not afforded to this doctrine. He had, by many several prophecies, in different times, long before presignified, that he would make such a revelation to mankind, to be dispensed by a Person extraordinarily qualified, and especially to be favoured by himself, whom therefore the Jewish nation did with much desire expect; to which prophecy, as no other hath appeared that can pretend to agree, so this is very congruous. And this is one way most proper to God of attesting his mind; because it cannot be anywise counterfeited, it being only in God's power to foretel such future events. Another way is by express voices and apparitions from heaven; and by these God declared the same at several fit seasons: to St John the Baptist (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all, even by his enemies that murdered him) when Jesus was baptized; to St Peter and St John, and St James, three most credible witnesses, if any can be, concerning matter of fact; and again, before the multitude, a little before his death; to St Paul, a person also in all respects credible, and in most remarkable circumstances: and such attestations as these it is not likely God would suffer to be given to falsehood or imposture: if any creature should be so daring as to endeavour it, we cannot reasonably deem, that God would permit his name and authority (in so direct a manner) to be abused.

Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5, &c. Luke ix. 35. 2 Pet. i. 16, &c. John xii. 28.

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But further, to thwart the course of nature, and act against its established laws, can only belong to him who is Lord of nature, who made it, and upholds it, and governs it by a perpetual decree: and this, in favour and countenance to this doctrine, hath God performed, not once, but often, in many places, through a long course of time, in several ways, by many instruments, most openly and visibly. Numerous were such supernatural works performed by the principal author of this doctrine, our Lord himself; many of them so public and palpable, that they convinced many of the spectators; and them not only indifferent and ingenuous people, but those who were most unwilling to be convinced, and ashamed or afraid to acknowledge their conviction. *Many*, saith St John, *believed on him, beholding the miracles that he did.* Nicodemus came secretly to him, and confessed thus; *We know that thou hast come a teacher from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.* Again it is said; *Many of the people believed in him, saying, When Christ comes, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?* Also of the rulers, *Many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. What shall we do?* said the chief priests and Pharisees; *for this man doth many wonders. If we thus let him alone, all men will believe on him.* St Peter thus confidently appeals to the Jewish nation; *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved* (or *demonstrated*) *by*, or *from, God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst*

Jer. v. 22.

Heb. ii. 4.

John x. 41; ii. 23; iii. 2; vii. 31; xii. 42; xi. 47, 48.

Acts ii. 22.

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of you, as you yourselves know. So notorious were many of our Saviour's miracles, that his worst adversaries could not but acknowledge them: and of these the most signal, his resurrection, was such, that no evasion seems devisable to withstand either its truth as to the fact, or its force to confirm our purpose, (that God did attest to this doctrine;) by it indeed God did, as St Paul speaks, πίστιν παρέχειν πᾶσι, yield an argument most persuasive to all, that what our Saviour taught (particularly concerning the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, and the judgment to come) is most certainly true. That our Saviour really died, all the world could testify, (no death was ever more solemn or remarkable;) that he rose again, was attested, not by one or two, but by many persons, (those most familiarly acquainted with him,) who did not see him once, in passing, at a distance, but often, for a good time, (forty days together,) conversed with him, (above five hundred of such persons at once did see him, as St Paul tells us;) so that they could not be deceived themselves therein, being αὐτόπται, and αὐτήκοοι τοῦ λόγου, perfectly informed concerning the matter as eyes and ears could make them: *Not having followed cunningly devised fables, did we acquaint you with the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ; but being* ἐπόπται τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος, *having a full view of his majesty:* and, *What we heard ourselves, what we did see with our eyes, what our hands did feel, of the Word of life:* such, as to their ability of testifying the truth, was these men's testimony: and concerning the fidelity and honesty of these witnesses, that they should not either in

Acts xvii. 31.
Rom. i. 4.
1 Pet. i. 3.
Vid. Acts xiii. 31, &c.
Acts i. 3, 4.
1 Cor. xv. 6.
Matt. xxviii. 7.
Luke i. 2.
2 Pet. i. 16.
1 John i. 1.

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this case (or concerning other actions of Christ which they attested to) wilfully deceive others, there be presumptions as great as can be. They were men that preached all goodness and sincerity to others, and in other things irreprovably practised them: they could have no design imaginable upon any profit, or honour, or advantage whatever to themselves; (they refused all; they willingly underwent all afflictions and disgraces for the sake of this very testimony; bearing the cross was the *officium* they pretended to undertake, and the *beneficium* too they did promise themselves to enjoy in this world.) Peace of conscience, and hope of future reward, was plainly all the support they had; neither of which they could have enjoyed or expected in the maintenance of a lie; persecution from men, and damnation from God, they must be sure of, if conscious of so villainous a design, to abuse the world with a tale: neither were they downright madmen or fools, (as they must have been, if they could have believed themselves, or thought to persuade others, such stories, had they been false;) their excellent writings shew the contrary, and the prodigious efficacy their endeavours found: so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm resolution, so invincible constancy and patience, nothing but truth itself and a good conscience could inspire men with. It is possible, in matter of speculation and subtlety, men upon weak grounds might be desperately pertinacious; but in matter of fact to be so, none in such circumstances and to such purposes could be so basely stupid; no such men surely. No matter of fact ever had, nor could have, in any respect, a stronger

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attestation: to doubt or distrust it were to invalidate all proof by testimony; (upon which yet all administration of justice, all commerce and transaction of human affairs, do in a manner subsist and depend;) it were to embrace the vanity of the most impudently pertinacious sceptics: and admitting the truth of their testimony, (as if we be reasonable and ingenuous we must,) to believe that God should do such works, or should permit them to be done, (should lend his sovereign power, and interpose an extraordinary hand,) for procuring credit to a falsehood; that he should so far contribute to men's delusion in matters of this nature, concerning his own honour and men's salvation, is a conceit as blasphemous and dishonourable to God, as derogatory to his attributes of wisdom, justice, and goodness, as can be. This kind of attestation did God yield, not only to the person of our Lord, but to his disciples and followers for a long time after, as by the same authentic testimonies doth appear; yea it continued for some ages, so long as any such extraordinary means were needful or convenient for conviction of the world; as by many express passages in Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Origen, Cyprian, and other ancient writers, might be shewed. I shall only add one kind of divine confirmation more, which was that of an extraordinary providence attending this doctrine in the conveyance and propagation thereof; that by the ministry of a few mean, poor, unlearned, and simple men, without any outward circumstances commending them to men's regard; without any assistance of power, any subtlety of wit, any trains of policy, any eloquence of speech, any external

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advantage discernible; yea against all these, against the utmost endeavours of all the force in the world, all politic devices, all cruel persecutions; against all prejudices of education, public law, inveterate custom; against most subtle and eloquent adversaries, it should in a short time so vastly prevail, so that within a while all the power, and wit, and eloquence of man did submit unto it, and serve under it, is an argument that God did interpose his almighty hand: no less power could effect so unaccountable a change; it seems no less a miracle in matters of this nature, (a moral or political miracle I may call it,) than to blow up a great oak with one's breath, or remove a mountain with a word speaking, would be a miracle in nature.

I might adjoin, that this doctrine being so much directed against, so vigorously impugning, the domination and delusion of wicked spirits, (being so prejudicial and destructive to the interest of hell,) all the malice, wit, and power of the Devil we may presume employed against it; and such potent combinations of mundane and infernal force to withstand, subdue, and overthrow, cannot justly or reasonably be ascribed to any other power than that of heaven. The proceeding also in so meek and quiet a way, without any tumult or terror, not rudely forcing men's outward compliance, but sweetly drawing their hearts into the love and approbation of this doctrine, so different from the course of human proceeding, so becoming the divine goodness, doth well consent and confer to the efficacy of this discourse. But I cannot insist longer on these things; yet think I may well upon all these premises (though very slightly and

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cursorily handled) conclude, that the Christian doctrine did proceed from God.

V. I shall briefly touch the last principle; that there be proper and sufficient means by which we may discern the genuine doctrines and dictates of Christianity. Indeed, if there were not such, our discourse hitherto used would be all vain, having no certain scope or subject; to no purpose had God dispensed a revelation for the direction and benefit of mankind, if he had not withal provided means of apprehending it with a competent certainty, such at least as might suffice to engage men honest and moderately wise upon the practice of all necessary duties prescribed; for, enough to satisfy cavilling spirits, that are possessed with prejudices, or proceed upon design, or delight in doubt and dispute, whose business and interest (or humour) it may be to confound things, did not need, perhaps could not be, provided: there have been men that have questioned what the most evident reason, the most common sense and experience shew; and such sceptics, or such politics, no means will serve to satisfy their minds, at least to stop their mouths; but in reality there be several means, by God's wise providence afforded, whereby we may discern Christian truth, some more convenient and secure, all in their kind proper and good. For transmitting to posterity any particular doctrine, no man can doubt but the most sure way is its being commended to writing by the authors and inventors thereof, (those upon whose authority it doth rely;) as if Pythagoras, or Socrates, or Zeno, their writings were extant, by them we should be best assured what their philosophies were: and no man will dispute whether that be genuine Peripateticism which

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is plainly read in the writings of Aristotle, the father of that sect; though even his unskilful expositors should mistake, or his prejudiced adversaries should pervert or calumniate his meaning. They that write are wont with most care and deliberation (and consequently with most perspicuity and exactness) to express their minds: and *Litera scripta manet;* letters are subject to least variation: memories are frail, fancies are busy; but writings are easily preserved without considerable alteration. The next 2. most sure way of conserving such doctrines, is the writings of the next disciples that immediately received them from the authors, or before they had passed through many hands, and commended them to writing: so what Socrates (for instance) did teach, the writings of Plato and Xenophon can with a very good degree of certainty acquaint us. The next is 3. the writings of men (studious and learned in those matters) after larger distances of time; so as we may be informed concerning Stoicism by the writings of Cicero, of Epictetus, of Seneca: the which way is more imperfect, every writer being apt to misapprehend and misrepresent something; especially all affecting to do somewhat more than transcribe what they find in former authors, to comment and descant upon, to adorn and set out, to confirm or confute the doctrine they relate, in order thereto representing it with advantage to their purpose. The last way is 4. by continued tradition, by oral instruction, successively from time to time; which is of all ways most liable to defect and corruption: for the teacher may unaptly express his meaning, and the hearer may not rightly understand him; the memory of both may in some material thing falter. Men love to

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be curious in their speech, to vary in expression, to make explications, to draw consequences, to mix their own conceits and inventions, to shew the acuteness of their wit and the fruitfulness of their fancy, to display all their faculties of ratiocination and eloquence: especially they are apt to accommodate doctrines to their own prejudices, inclinations, and designs; whence error and difference may insensibly creep through this conduit; and the further such tradition departs from the original spring, the more subject it is to contract such alterations and impurities. Every doctrine thus propagated is like a stream; at the head it is small and narrow, clear and pure; proceeding on, it grows larger and fouler: so tradition swells, by taking in what oblique channels of private fancy and pragmatical invention discharge into it; and by receiving tincture from particular inclination or politic design, it grows muddy and feculent. We have all these ways afforded us; and for confirmation and distinction of our doctrine may use them all: in the principal doctrines (such as we mentioned) they all conspire; and therefore there can be no reason to doubt, that they are pure and genuine: but in reason the best and surest means of knowing what our Saviour and his disciples taught, are the writings of his disciples, (persons, besides their advantage of immediately learning from our Saviour's mouth, extraordinarily assisted by God in their ministries and instructions,) of whose writings many have by God's good providence been preserved to our times, being such as no man hath reason to question, that they came from them, (no more than concerning the most undoubted writings of any author;) wherein they aim at nothing else, but to declare the doctrine of

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Christianity, and inculcate the practice thereof, in the most simple, plain, and familiar manner, plainly agreeing with each other in the main drift and design of their discourses; so that we may justly presume, that all important doctrines of Christianity are in them fully delivered, and that whatever we find in them perspicuously expressed, we are obliged to take for such. To the same purposes we may use the writings of the Christians of the first ages, who with care committed to writing what they had learned from the mouths of the Apostles or their successors: for in so small distance of time it is not likely any considerable variation should intercur; neither would such men, living in times of persecution, and suffering for conscience sake, so free from all designs of avarice or ambition, be so ready to alter or adulterate the doctrine they received: and supposing the writings of the Apostles were wanting, even theirs would yield us a competent knowledge of the Christian doctrine: neither, were their monuments also lost, should we be quite destitute of means, from the lowest and latest, whether writings or traditions of Christianity, to discover its principal and fundamental doctrines: for discreetly paring off some excrescences, discernible enough to have proceeded from human invention, what sophistical curiosity hath introduced, (nice positions and questions about the right application of terms of art,) what politic design hath added, (wherein some sorts of men are, we may plainly see, privately concerned,) what plainly relishes of those ages wherein ignorance and superstitious dotage did so generally prevail, what is inconsistent with the most generally acknowledged principles of our Religion; refining, I say, with some

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serious consideration, the pure ore from such dross, we may not difficultly perceive, even by the use of the most inferior means allowed us, what the true principles of Christianity are. But since God hath vouchsafed us so various helps, we may in their due order, according to our capacity, apply them all; comparing present traditions with ancient writings, and confirming what we learn from these, by the supreme and unquestionable authority of Holy Scripture. But this argument the time will not permit me to prosecute distinctly and as it deserves. These digressionary discourses (which yet I thought pertinent to the design of our business, declaring and confirming the grounds of our faith) being thus passed over; I shall hereafter closely pursue the explication of the Creed: in the mean while craving pardon from your patience, &c.

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I believe in God the Father.

THE appellation of God, not improperly taken, (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office they bear to the supreme God,) but relating to him, who only, truly, and properly is styled God, is sometimes put absolutely, sometimes hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely or singly put, it sometimes refers, by way of eminency, particularly to the first Person in the glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the Son of God; and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God; and when God is put in distinction from the other Persons: when for instance it is said: *That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: The word was with God. To serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven:* and in that form of blessing: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all:* but commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered (according to that divine essence common to the three Persons) to whom in that respect all the divine attributes agree, and from whom all divine operations (*absolute et ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed, that the name of God might here be applied: for that there is one God, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all Religion; which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the Creed.

Vide 1 Thess. i. 9, 10. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph. i. 3; v. 6. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. John i. 1. 1 Thess. i. 9, 10. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

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And supposing the word, in part, doth imply this sense, the attribute, or title of Father, doth in many respects, truly and properly belong to God. Being a father denotes causality, sustenance, beneficence, governance; especially when these operations are attended with particular care and affection; in all which respects (severally considered or jointly) God may fitly be styled Father: Father of all things being: Father of all intellectual beings especially: the Father particularly of all men; and among men, chiefly of good men.

1 He is the Father of all beings, as the maker and efficient cause of them: so is he called in that famous sentence of Plato's *Timæus*[a]: Τὸν μὲν οὖν Ποιητὴν καὶ Πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν: *That Maker and Father of this universe it is hard to find out; and having found him, it is impossible to express him unto all men:* and Πατέρα πάντων, St Paul calls him, *The Father of all things,* (taking πάντων in the largest sense). *To us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things.* Neither only as author, but as he by whose care and providence all things subsist, and are contained in order; *He commanded, and they were created: he hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree, which shall not pass: Upon whom the eyes of all wait; and he giveth them their meat in due season,* as the Psalmist sings: and in this respect we often find, even in Heathen poets[b], the title

Eph. iv. 6.

1 Cor. viii. 6.

Ps. cxlviii. 5, 6; cxlv. 15.

[a] [28 c.]

[b] Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam voluit.—Virg. Georg. I. 121.
Jam satis terris nivis atque diræ
Grandinis misit Pater.—Hor. Car. I. 2. 1.

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Pater (Father) absolutely put to denote God, as the author and disposer of all things. And *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis by which the wisest of poets doth frequently use to design the supreme God.

2 But more especially God is called the Father of intellectual beings; *The Father of Spirits:* particularly the angels are (by excellency) called the sons of God: *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them: When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy:* where, for *the sons of God,* the LXX. have ἄγγελοί μου[c]; (though perhaps all God's creatures may there be understood, as it were rejoicing and exulting in their being newly conferred on them by God.) And of these beings God more especially is Father, not only for that he did produce them, and upholds them, as all other things, in being, but because they nearer resemble him in their nature; because he hath a more dear affection unto, a more particular care over them, and because he governs them in a more excellent kind, (by obligations of reason, ingenuity, and justice;) they also being capable to render offices of piety, obedience, and gratitude to him again. And thus even the Pagan Theologers did conceive God in especial manner the Father of the gods; (intending such gods as were not of men's making, creatures consecrated by the flattery or fondness of men; but of a higher rank,

Heb. xii. 9. Numb. xvi. 22. Ezek. xviii. 4. Job i. 6; xxxviii. 7.

O Pater et Rex Jupiter.—Hor. Serm. ii. 1. 43.

[b] Ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε, Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων.—Hom. Il. VIII. 31.

[c] Vid. Psal. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1. *The sons of the mighty,* בְּנֵי אֵלִים, some take to be the angels in heaven.

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answering to our angels, which they conceived, as to approach in excellency of nature, so to attend upon God, partaking of his glory and happiness;) hence *Divûm Pater* is a common title of God among them: and we have in Plato's *Timæus* an oration, which he feigns God made to them at the creation, beginning thus; Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς Πατήρ τε, *O ye principal gods, of whom I am the Maker and Father*[d]: concerning which kind of God's children he pretends to deduce all he can speak from ancient and original tradition. But to come nearer to our particular relation,

3 God is also in especial manner the Father of mankind,

Gentis humanæ Pater atque Custos,

as Horace[e] calls him. Adam was the son of God; and so, at least, we are God's offspring[f]; *His hands made and fashioned us, and his mouth breathed into us the spirit of life: He formed our spirit within us:* we were made after his image, and naturally resemble him[g]: he hath assigned us the principal and most honourable station in this his family of visible creatures; he hath shewed an especial tenderness toward us in providing for us all manner of sustenance and accommodation; in educating us with wholesome advices and precepts; in bearing with exceeding patience our infirmities and offences; in inflicting moderate chastisements, to reduce us to duty and amend-

Job x. 8. Gen. i. 27. Zech. xii. 1. Ps. lxxi. 6.

[d] [41 A.]

[e] Carm. i. 12 [49.]

[f] Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur a Diis sunt.—Sen. Ep. XLIV. [1.]

Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ Θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐπιπεπλεγμένα.—Epict. Diss. I. 9 [5.]

[g] Vid. Epict. Diss. I. 3. 9.

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ment: all his carriage toward mankind argues a paternal regard and affection thereto.

4 Further; in a peculiar notion God is the Father of good men[h]: such relation being built upon higher grounds and considerations: the seeds of virtue are by his grace sown in their hearts; that emendation and perfection of nature is effected by him. They resemble him in disposition of mind, in purpose, in action; which are more perfect and noble resemblances than those of nature; (being holy as he is holy; beneficent and merciful as he is: these qualities, our Saviour tells us, do render, or at least declare him our Father; do constitute men, or argue them to be, the sons of God: *Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you—that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven: Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing thence; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High.*) To such God bears a paternal affection and compassion; *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He deals with them as with his children, in all respects; he instructs and guides them; he cherishes and comforts them; he maintains and protects them; he gently reproves and corrects them; *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos viros animum, et illos fortiter amat.... Inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute. Amicitiam dico? immo etiam necessitudo et similitudo: quoniam quidem bonus ipse tempore tantum a Deo*

1 Pet. i. 23.

Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 35.

Ps. ciii. 13.

Heb. xii. 7.

Prov. iii. 12.

[h] Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est.—Sen. Ep. XLI. [2.]

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differt, discipulus ejus, æmulatorque, et vera progenies: quem pater ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat: God, saith a Pagan Philosopher, *hath a fatherly mind toward good men, and mightily loves them... Between them and God there is a friendship, virtue conciliating it: a friendship, say I? yea, a kindred and resemblance: for that a good man differs only from God in time,* (and degree,) *being his disciple and imitator, and his true offspring; whom that magnificent Father, no softly exacter of virtue, as severe fathers do, brings up hardly*[1].

5 And we may observe, that God, in his proceedings with men, (such as he designs to contain them by within their duty, and lead them to happiness,) delights to represent and commend himself under this obliging and endearing relation: he did so toward the Israelites; *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.* So God expostulates with that people. And thus David in their behalf addresses himself to God; *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty,* &c. and, *I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn: Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child?* so God argues with them.

Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11. Vid. Exod. iv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 9, 20.

6 But in the Christian dispensation, God more signally represents himself in this quality:

[1] Sen. de Prov. cap. II. [4.]

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he treats us not so much as a Lord and Master, with imperious awfulness; but as a friend and a father, with gracious condescension and allurement of kindness; *I call you not servants; you are my friends, if you do what I command you: So that* (it is St Paul's collection from a precedent discourse) *thou art not still a servant, but a son.* Our Saviour, saith the author to the Hebrews, was not ashamed to call them (his disciples and followers) brethren. *Go,* saith our Saviour, *to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and my God, and your God.* Accordingly all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf, are of such a nature, and are set out by such terms, which ground and import this relation.

John xv. 15, 14. Gal. iv. 7. Heb. ii. 11. John xx. 17.

1 That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our souls, as the Gospel requires, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new man within us. *We are* αὐτοῦ ποίημα, *(his work,* or *production,)* being *created in Christ Jesus to good works. Ye have been taught—to put on the new man, that is created according to God* (according to God's image) *in righteousness and true holiness: If a man be not born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God: Whoever is begot of God doth not do sin.*

Eph. ii. 10. Eph. iv. 21, 24. Col. iii. 10. John iii. 3. 1 John iii. 9.

2 The reception of a believer into the privileges and advantages of Christianity, is termed υἱοθεσία, the making of him a son; adopting him into God's family; conferring upon him the title and the quality of God's child; the internal disposition of spirit, and the liberty of access to God suitable to this relation: *Whosoever,* saith St John,

Gal. iv. 5. Rom. viii. 15. Eph. i. 5; iii. 15; ii. 19. John i. 12.

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did receive him, he gave to them authority to become the sons of God; (he invested them in that dignity;) *even to them who believed in his name:*
Gal. iii. 26. *Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus;*
1 John iii. 1. (i.e. by embracing Christianity:) and, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we*
Rom. viii. 15. *should be called the sons of God: Ye have not re-*
Gal. iv. 6. *ceived the spirit of servitude again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, O Father:* (by which, in our prayers, with humble affection, according to our Saviour's instruction, we say, *Our Father*).

3 That resurrection after death to a better state of life, entering into glory and happiness
Matt. xix. 28. and immortality, is worthily styled παλιγγενεσία, a being generated or born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God;
Luke xx. 35. *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead— are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrec-*
1 John iii. 2. *tion. We know that if* (or *when*) *he shall appear,*
1 Cor. xv. 49. *we shall be like him: As we have borne the image of the earthly* (man), *we shall also bear the image*
2 Cor. iii. 18. *of the heavenly: We shall be metamorphosed* (or *transfigured*) *into the same image;* shall be made
2 Pet. i. 4. *Partakers of the divine nature.* That state of bliss
Gal. iv. 7. is therefore styled a portion, or inheritance, allotted
Rom. viii. 17. to sons; and consequent upon that relation, *If sons,* saith St Paul, *then heirs; heirs of God, and*
Col. iii. 24. *coheirs with Christ; receiving the reward and pro-*
Heb. ix. 15. *mise of an eternal inheritance:* and, saith St Peter,
1 Pet. i. 3, 4. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath*

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begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

4 I might add, that Christian men become the sons of God by our Saviour's intervention; by his assumption of our nature, and our conformity to his image, as St Paul speaks, whereby he becomes *The firstborn among many brethren: God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons.* In this respect our Saviour is πρωτότοκος ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, *The firstborn among many brethren*[k]. Rom. viii. 29. Gal. iv. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 29. Heb. ii. 14.

Upon so many several scores is God our Father; as we are his creatures, (being made, preserved, and maintained by him;) as we are intellectual creatures, (placed in degree and quality of nature so near him;) as we by virtue and goodness anywise resemble him; as we are Christians, (adopted into his family, renewed by his grace, and destinated to a participation of his glory).

Now the consideration and belief of these grounds, (each one and all of them together,) upon which this relation of God to us is founded, hath manifold good uses, is apt to inform us of, to enforce upon us many necessary duties, resulting from it.

It teaches us what reverence and honour and observance is due to him; (not from gratitude only, and ingenuity, but in justice:) *If I be a Father, where is my honour?* saith God, in Malachi. If we be bound to love and respect those, Mal. i. 6.

[k] Vid. Forb. [Instruct. Histor. Theol.] p. 52.

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who, under God, have been instrumental in producing and maintaining us, how much more to him, who principally hath bestowed our being, and all the supports, comforts, and conveniences thereof upon us; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the privileges of the future, incomparably better, eternal state? If we neglect our duty, may not God justly expostulate with us, as with those children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is he not thy Father that bought thee?* (ὃς ἐκτήσατό σε, who procured and acquired thee to himself;) *hath he not made thee, and established thee?*

Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

It will induce us to humility; if we are God's sons, have received our being, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and riches from his disposal, what reason have we to ascribe anything to ourselves; to be raised in conceit, ambitious of praise or reputation, upon the score of any such things? *Who made thee to differ? for what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received?*

1 Cor. iv. 7.

It shews us, that we are as Plato often speaks, Θεοῦ κτήματα, *God's possessions, God's riches.* If he made us, whatever we are, (according to all accounts and capacities; whether men by his common providence, or good men by his especial grace,) he hath the best right and title possible unto us; he may justly make such use of us, as he thinks good: we may well be obliged *To glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.*

Ps. civ. 24.

1 Cor. vi. 20.

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We have reason also hence to be content with whatsoever condition God disposeth us unto, or imposeth upon us; he doth therein justly; and, if we complain, may we not be answered, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* Matt. xx. 15. Is it not lawful? yea, is it not probable, that God will order things for the best, for the good of his children? Will he willingly hurt them? Can he design their mischief? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* Isai. xlix. 15. Sooner may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, malicious, and cruel towards their children, than God neglect the good of his offspring. We have reason therefore to be satisfied with all that befalls us; to be patient in the sorest afflictions; esteeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed and tending to our good; *Thou shalt consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee,* saith God to the Israelites: Deut. viii. 5. *We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* Heb. xii. 9, 10. What sweeter comfort can there be, than to know that the most distasteful and cross accidents befalling us, do conduce to our profit, shall prove most beneficial to us?

This consideration also serves to cherish our faith, and raise our hope, and quicken our devotion.

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Whom shall we confide in, if not in our Father? From whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath given us already so much, even all we have? If we in our need, with due reverence and submission, request help from him, can such a Father refuse us? No. *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask fish, will give him a serpent? If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11.

This consideration also may beget in us a due valuation of ourselves; and thereby raise us from base and unworthy practices; excite and encourage us to worthy designs and attempts. Even natural light dictates to us the use of this consideration; and heathen philosophers much apply it: *If any one,* saith Epictetus, *could duly be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is the Father both of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself: if Cæsar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness: and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, will it not elevate thee*[1]*?*" So the Philosopher. Shall we that are so nobly born, of so illustrious an extraction, so far debase ourselves, as to regard and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? shall we not be ashamed of such a contemptible degeneracy? shall we not be afraid, for such unworthiness, to be degraded, rejected, and disinherited by our holy Father?

[1] [Diss. I. 3. The passage is given in the original, Vol. v. p. 310.]

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who can nowise brook that such blots and dishonours should stick to his lineage, that such disorders and misbehaviour should be committed in his family, that we should so deform his image impressed upon us: *Every branch that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away,* as our Saviour tells us. It is proper for children to resemble their father, in their countenance, in their temper, in their doings; *If ye were Abraham's children,* (so our Saviour argues) *ye would do the works of Abraham:* and, *Ye are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father;* (because ye resemble him in his murderous and treacherous disposition). So if we pretend to be the children of God, we must, according to St Paul's exhortation, imitate him as dear children: we must be holy, and pure, just, beneficent, merciful, perfect as he is; otherwise we fall from this high dignity, we forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God; we become aliens, and exiles, and enemies, instead of sons and friends, unto him.

John xv. 2, 6.

John viii. 39, 44.

Eph. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. Matt. v. 45, 48. Luke vi. 35, 36. John i. 3; iii. 17.

Considering also this relation, will prompt us how we should be affected, and how behave ourselves towards all God's creatures: if God be the Father of all things, they are in some sort all our brethren: shall we then abuse, trample upon, or tyrannize over any of them? will God permit it, doth it become us to do so? If we be all branches sprouting from one root, streams issuing from one common source of divine beneficence, members of one family, we are obliged to universal good-will and charity[m]; to be kind and compassionate; to be helpful and beneficial, so far as our capacity

[m] Vid. Epict. Diss. I. 9.

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reacheth; to endeavour, as we may, to preserve the order, and promote the welfare of the world, and all things in it. Especially toward those beings, who, according to a more proper and excellent sense, are entitled the sons of this our common Father; toward beings intellectual, we hence learn our respective duties: of love and respect toward those elder brethren of ours, the Angels, (the blessed and holy ones, I mean, such as have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty toward God;) of charity and good-will to each other; which if we do not maintain, let us consider we are undutiful and unkind to God first, and then to ourselves; both his relations and our own we hate and harm, his children and our brethren, by hating or harming any man whatever; especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by so many other more peculiar bands is straitly tied unto us; upon so many better grounds doth stand related both to God and us.

But let thus much suffice for this attribute or title of God, understood in this manner, as applicable to God essentially considered; which notion we see how true and useful it is. But that God is also here (and that according to the principal intention of the words) to be understood, so as by way of eminency to signify the first Person in the blessed Trinity, and that the title or apposition Father doth respect especially him, who, according to a more proper and excellent manner[n], is the Son of God, our Lord Christ Jesus, may upon divers accounts appear.

[n] Κατά τινα σχέσιν ὑψηλοτέραν.—Greg. Naz. [Orat. xxxi. Opp. Tom. i. p. 560 c.]

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1 Because it follows, *And in Jesus Christ his Son:* God is to be taken in that notion according to which Christ is his Son: the Father preceding relates to the Son following.

2 Because this Creed appears (according to our former Discourses) enlarged upon the foundation of the first most simple confessions, used in Baptism, and those derived from the form prescribed by our Saviour, of baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: wherefore the Father here is to be interpreted according to that form. Matt. xxviii. 19.

3 The ancient Christians (from whom we received the words, and may best understand the sense) did thus generally take and expound them.

Now that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the universal tenor of the Gospel speaketh, and it is the chief doctrine thereof: this, God from heaven by a vocal attestation declared, (*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;*) our Saviour professed; the Apostles preached; the miracles (performed by our Saviour) were intended to confirm. In this, God manifested his transcendent love and mercy and goodness to mankind, that he gave his only begotten Son, that no believer in him should perish, but have everlasting life; that he did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: his own Son, ἴδιος υἱὸς, his peculiar Son, in a more proper and peculiar manner so: his μονογενὴς, only begotten Son, (in a respect, according to which no other can pretend to that relation;) his ἀγαπητὸς, his darling, (whom he loves with a superlative dearness). So that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that it is a fundamental point of our Religion and John x. 38. Matt. iii. 17. John iii. 16. Rom. viii. 32.

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belief; and that it is mainly designed here, doth sufficiently appear. Now the grounds of this paternity are several: his temporal generation by
Luke i. 35. the Spirit and power of God; *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called*
Gal. iv. 4. *the Son of God: When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman.* His
Acts xiii. 32, 33. restoral from death to life; *We preach the promise made to your fathers, that God hath fulfilled it to us their children, raising up Jesus; according also to what is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:* whence he
Col. i. 18. is called πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, *The firstborn from the dead.* His designation of him to sovereign
John i. 49. power and authority; *Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel,* was Nathanael's con-
Heb. i. 2; xi. 8. fession: *Whom God appointed* (or *made*) *heir of all; putting all things under His feet: Father,* our
Compare John xvii. 1, 2. vid. Saviour prays, *glorify thy Son, as Thou hast given him power over all flesh: All power is given me*
John v. 25, &c. *in heaven and upon earth.* But the most eminent
Matt. xxviii. 18. ground of this paternity (and most proper to this
Eph. i. 22. Heb. i. 6. place) is that eternal generation, whereby God the Father did in the beginning, before all time imaginable or possible, (in a manner unconceivable and ineffable,) communicate his own divine essence to God the Son: his essence, not specifically the same, (such as men impart, when they beget a son in their own likeness,) but the same individually; begetting him perfectly like himself[o],

[o] Ὃς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως. —Col. i. 15.

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without any so much as accidental dissimilitude or disparity; (by an unconceivable irradiation of his glory, and impression of his substance, as the Author to the Hebrews speaks). Heb. i. 3.

Which doctrine, (though full of deep mystery, and transcending the capacity of our understanding to comprehend,) as we are obliged, because it hath been God's good pleasure to reveal it unto us, with a firm faith and humble adoration to embrace, so it is of great consequence and (even practical) use; serving to illustrate the wonderful grace of God in the dispensation evangelical, and thereby to beget suitable gratitude in us; encouragement and enforcement to our duty, strong faith and hope in God; as also to direct and order our devotion toward him.

But these considerations (with the further probation of this great truth against some, who have dared to oppose it) I shall refer to that article, in which we most expressly confess, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and consequently that God is his Father. And therefore proceed to the next word,

Almighty.

Though all the Divine perfections (being intrinsical unto, and identified with, the Divine nature or essence) do really and equally belong to each Person of the blessed Trinity[a], yet are eminently in some respect attributed to the Father, as the first Person in order of nature, the original fountain Vid. Rom. xvi. 27.

[a] Omne nomen dictum de Deo respectu creaturæ indicat essentiam; adeoque prædicatur de tribus personis simul: exceptis quæ pertinent ad unionem seu dispensationem, id est, ad incarnationem sive assumptam carnem.—Forb. p. 24. [Instruct. Histor. Theol. Lib. I. Cap. 12.]

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and root of the Deity: likewise, although all Divine operations *ad extra* (as proceeding from the same Divine will and power) do proceed from all the three Persons[b], conspiring in them, yet are some *κατ' οἰκονομίαν*, (by way of mysterious dispensation,) appropriated to one, some to another: as creation and dilection to the Father; reconciliation and redemption to the Son; illumination and sanctification to the Holy Ghost. Omnipotency therefore is here ascribed to God the Father not exclusively, but eminently, (for the Son and the Holy Ghost by participation of the Divine nature from the Father are also omnipotent[c]). And God the Father is called the Maker of heaven and earth; although by the Son (or eternal Word) also,

John i. 3. Col. i. 16. *All things were made, and without him was made nothing that was made:* and, *All things were created by him, both things in heaven, and things in earth, and things upon earth; both things visible, and things invisible:* and the Spirit of God is said

Job xxvi. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 6. to have garnished the heavens; and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the spirit of his mouth.* This I premise to prevent mistake, in supposing the glorious per-

John v. 19. Matt. xii. 28. fections, and works attributed to God the Father, to be ascribed to him, in distinction, and excluding the other Persons. Now to the attributes themselves.

[b] Quando unus trium in aliquo opere nominatur, universa operari Trinitas intelligitur.—Aug.

Una voluntas est Patris et Filii, et inseparabilis operatio.—Id.

[c] Sancta et inseparabilis Trinitas nunquam aliquid extra se sigillatim operari noverit.—Ambros. in Symb. cap. ix. apud Forb. p. 23. [Instruct. Histor. Theol. Lib. i. cap. 12.]

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The title or epithet παντοκράτωρ (which we render *Almighty*, or *Omnipotent*, there being no other word more properly and fully to express it) is often, in a manner peculiar and characteristical, (ascribed to God in the Scripture; but in the New Testament from imitation, as it seems, or translation of the Greek in the Old, where it answers to two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai;* (especially to the former, for the latter is only so rendered in some places of the book of Job;) the name *Sabaoth,* I say; for that it is so, we have expressly affirmed in several places; *Their Redeemer is strong; Jehovah Sabaoth is his name;* and, *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought—Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name;* from whence some critics[d] deduce Ζεὺς Σαββάσιος, (Σαβάζιος) mentioned in some heathen writers. Now the name *Sabaoth* doth seem to import God's universal dominion over the world: for all things of the world, as being ranged in a goodly order (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battle) are called armies: thus, *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them,* (καὶ πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, saith the Greek: *and all the world,* or *the furniture of them:*) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them: Bless the Lord all ye his hosts;* (that is, all his creatures:) *Lift up your eyes on high,* saith the Prophet Isaiah, *and behold who hath created these things; that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his*

Jer. l. 34. Amos iv. 13. Isai. xviii. 7; xlviii. 2. Gen. ii. 1. Ps. xxxiii. 6; ciii. 21. Isai. xl. 26. Compare Ps. cxlviii.

[d] Selden. de Diis Syr. III. [Opp. Vol. II. p. 229.]

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might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth: where God is represented bringing forth, and ordering his creatures, as a general summons together to a rendezvous, and musters, and embattles his host. Hence, I say, this title of God, (παντοκράτωρ) seems derived; (which in the Revelation of St John is most frequently attributed to him; *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, ὁ παντοκράτωρ, who was, and is, and is to be,* is that heavenly hymn there resounded to God.)

Rev. i. 8; iv. 8; xi. 17, &c.

But not dealing so strictly, but taking the word παντοκράτωρ in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν, or ὁ πάντων κράτος ἔχων, it may import, either right and authority over all, *Omnipotestas;* or power and ability to do all things, *Omnipotentia;* or actual exercise of such authority and power, in ruling and disposing all things, *Omnipotentatus;* also the possession or holding all things, *Omnitenentia;* and the preservation or upholding all things, *Omnicontinentia:* for κρατεῖν hath in propriety and ordinary use all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ.

He hath, first, a just right and authority over all things; he is naturally the sovereign Lord and King of the world; *The Lord of lords, and King of kings;* the spring and original of all right and authority. Whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, it doth in respect of all things agree to God. Aristotle in his Politics discourseth thus: Government doth aim at, and tend to, the mutual benefit of the governor and governed; that therefore which is most able and best disposed to provide for, and procure, the common benefit, in natural reason and justice, deserves

Ps. cxxxvi. 3. Deut. x. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Rev. xix. 16.

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to be, and is fitly the governor[e]; whence the soul hath a right to govern the body, and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such men as did so eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them, according to natural congruity, the government of others should appertain. If then such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably exceed all things, hath a right to govern all: he is only wise, (and thence able,) only good, (and thence willing to manage all for the general welfare and benefit of the world). If eminency of power doth qualify for dominion, (as surely it doth, for what cannot be withstood, must in reason be submitted unto; it is vain to question that authority which by force altogether irresistible can maintain itself,) God hath the only right; nothing in the world being able to dispute his title; *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* All things are weak and feeble in comparison; are in his hand; lie under his feet; are wholly at his discretion and disposal; *The Lord is the true God,* saith the Prophet, *and the everlasting king; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee: He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*

Rom. xvi. 27. Luke xviii. 19. Ps. lxxxix. 6, 8. Jer. x. 10. Ps. lxvi. 3, 7.

[e] Τὸ μὲν γὰρ δυνάμενον τῇ διανοίᾳ προορᾶν ἄρχον φύσει καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.—Lib. I. cap. 2.

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If to have made all things and to preserve them, do create a right of governing, (as it must needs: for what can we challenge justly a dominion over, if not over our own works; over that which we feed and nourish continually; over that which depends altogether upon us, and which subsists but at our pleasure?) then well may the
Rev. iv. 11. Elders acknowledge, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honour and the power;* (that is, the royal majesty and dominion over the world:) *for thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are and were made.* Well might *Every creature that is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and those things which are*
Rev. v. 13. *in the sea, and all things in them, cry out; To him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion,* τὸ κράτος, *for ever and ever:* and
Neh. ix. 6. Nehemiah; *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, the sea, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven wor-*
Isai. xxxvii. 16. *shippeth thee:* and king Hezekiah; *O Lord of hosts—thou art the God, thou alone of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.* Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, the rightful sovereign (upon all accounts) of all things;

Hominum Divûmque æterna potestas,

as the wise heathen Poet[f] could acknowledge and call him.

[f] Virg. Æn. x. 18.

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He is also so in regard of his infinite power, (omnipotent.) Natural light affords us pregnant arguments and experiments of the greatness of his power, demonstrated in the constitution and conservation of the world; (disposing so stupendously vast, so innumerably various creatures into so comely and stable a posture: by them *His eternal power and Divinity are discerned,* Rom. i. 20. as St Paul tells us:) he that could effect so much, his power must needs be greater than we can imagine or comprehend: but Holy Scripture declares more fully and clearly the extent of his power; that it reaches unto the utmost possibility of things; that whatever is not repugnant to his nature, (to his essential perfections, his wisdom, and goodness,) doth not misbecome him to do, or to the nature of things to be done, (that doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impossible, and no object of any power,) he can easily achieve: there is nothing so difficult, but he can perform it; nothing so strong or stubborn, but he can subdue it; *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* saith God Gen. xviii. 14. to Abraham, when Sarah doubted or admired concerning God's promise, that she in so extreme an age should become fruitful, *Behold,* (saith the Jer. xxxii. 17, 27. Prophet Jeremiah in his prayer to God,) *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power, and thy stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:* Οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα; *Nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or done) Luke i. 37. *shall be impossible to God,* (if he pleases to undertake it,) said the Angel to the Blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her, concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural.

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Job xlii. 2. That a rich man should be induced to part with all, and submit to God's will, our Saviour af-
Matt. xix. 24, 26. firmed exceedingly difficult, (harder than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle:) but to satisfy his disciples' scruple thence arising, he subjoins; *With men this is impossible; but*
2 Chron. xx. 6. *with God all things are possible. In thine hand,* saith Jehoshaphat, *there is power and might, so*
Dan. iv. 35. *that none is able to withstand thee. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth:* and *none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* Nebuchadnezzar, having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understand-
Isai. xiv. 27. ing, did so confess: *The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* He is *El Shaddai,* the God all-sufficient; able to do whatever he pleases. He made the world at first
Ps. xxxiii. 6, 8, 9. with a word; (*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,* saith the Psalmist; *and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth:—let the earth fear the Lord:—for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;*) and by a word he
Heb. i. 3. doth preserve it, *Upholding all things,* saith the Apostle, *by the word of his power,* or *by his mighty word;* and by a word he can destroy all things; yea more easily, in a manner, by his silence; by withdrawing that salutary breath,
Ps. civ. 29. which cherisheth all things; *Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou withholdest thy breath, they die, and return to their dust.* For even in this respect is God all-powerful, for that all power is derived from and depends upon him: he not only

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can do all things[s], but nothing can be done without him; *Without me you can do nothing*, is true not only in spiritual matters, but in all others: *He gives*, as St Paul preached at Athens, *life*, (or being with all vital faculties,) *and breath*, (all natural powers,) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, *by him*) *we live, and move, and have our being;* whatever we have, or can do, proceeds from him: thus is God Almighty. John xv. 5. Acts xvii. 25, 28.

He is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and exerts his power, according to his pleasure; he hath not only a just title to govern all things, and ability to sway, but he uses them; *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself, to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!* It is, indeed, a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe the government of things, so much inferior to him; yet for the general good he doth it; *Thine*, saith David, *is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all: both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all: in thine hand is power and might*, &c. He is, indeed, the only governor, absolutely and directly so, (ὁ μόνος δυνάστης, *The only Potentate;*) all authority and power are imparted by him, are subordinate to him; by his Ps. ciii. 19. Vid. Ps. xlvii. Ps. cxiii. 4, 5, 6. 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

[s] Εἰ Θεὸν οἶσθα,
Ἴσθ' ὅτι καὶ ῥέξαι δαίμονι πᾶν δυνατόν.—
Callim. apud Plut. de Plac. Lib. i. cap. vii.
Ῥᾴδια πάντα Θεῷ τελέσαι καὶ ἀδύνατον οὐδέν.

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disposal and direction all potentates receive them; and in his behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and officers, they administer any dominion or power: it was Nebuchadnezzar's doom to be driven from men until he did know this truth, (so necessary for all princes to know and consider,) *That the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will: His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him: Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another: There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God: The judgment is God's,* (said Moses in his charge,) exercised in his behalf, and according to his appointment. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, the only direct sovereign commander; the author and fountain of all authority, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings.*

Dan. iv. 25. Dan. vii. 27. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. Rom. xiii. 1. John xix. 11. Deut. i. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

He also is παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and just possessor of all things; (*omnitenens;*) *Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth,* saith Melchizedek: *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods: Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God; the earth also, with all that therein is,* saith Moses: and the Psalmist again; *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof,* (that is, all which the world contains, which it is replenished with,) *thou hast*

Gen. xiv. 19. Ps. xxiv. 1, 2; l. 12. Deut. x. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 11. 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Ps. xcv. 5.

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founded them: and, *The sea is his, and* (that is, *for*) *he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.* Thou hast founded them: all things are God's goods and possessions, (for that he hath made, and by creation purchased them to himself; so we see the Psalmist argues,) and so the disposal of them doth belong unto him; he may and doth apply them to what use he pleaseth.

He is also *Omnitenens;* it is St Austin's word[h], as containing all things in his hand, encircling and comprehending them, as it were, in his arms: *Whither shall I go from thy spirit?* saith the Psalmist, *or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure? Mine hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens.* Ps. cxxxix. 7—10. Isai. xl. 12. Isai. xlviii. 13.

He lastly is παντοκράτωρ, in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. Οὐκοῦν, saith Gregory Nyssen[i], ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτωρ φωνῆς ἀκούσωμεν, τοῦτο νοοῦμεν, τὰ πάντα τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν: *When we hear the word almighty, we understand, that God doth contain all things in being. Thou, even thou,* say the Levites in Nehemiah, *art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things* Neh. ix. 6.

[h] [In Gen. ad Lit. Lib. IV. cap. 12. Opp. Tom. III. col. 126 E]
[i] [Con. Eunom. Orat. I. Opp. Tom. II. p. 39 D.]

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that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. In all these respects is God truly almighty.

The belief and consideration of which truths are of great importance and use to us.

If God be the sovereign Lord of all things, (which is the chief sense of this article,) and we consequently his subjects and vassals; then is all awful reverence, worship, and obedience due from us to him: we are in justice bound humbly to adore his majesty, and readily to perform his commands, and patiently to submit to his will. We must not think to guide our actions according to our own will or fancy, as if we had no Lord over us; but conform them we must to the decrees and determinations of our most good and wise Governor[k]. It is our duty to do thus, and we have reason to do it willingly and cheerfully; for it is also our happiness to be under so just and gracious a government: it is no cruel tyrant, no unjust usurper, but a most gracious and equal King, whom we are in subjection to; of whom it is said truly, *Justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face;* whom we are exceedingly obliged to thank, that he will vouchsafe to undertake the tuition and oversight of us; so that in this consideration the Psalmist might well excite the world to joy and jubilation; *O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph: for the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.* All the world

Ps. lxxxix. 14.

Ps. xlvii. 1, 2.

[k] Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσοντες πάρεσμεν, &c.—Plut. consol. ad Apol. [Opp. Tom. VI. p. 424. Ed. Reisk.]

Τραχὺς μονάρχος, οὐδ' ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ.—Æschyl. Prom. [324.]

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hath reason, not only to be content and acquiesce, but to rejoice and triumph in being subject to such a Governor, so able, so willing to maintain good order, peace, and equity therein.

Also, if God be omnipotent, able to do all things, and of irresistible power, then have we all reason, to hope in his providence, and rely upon his promises. For that he is able to supply us with all we need, and perform whatever he hath promised[1]. It was Abraham's virtue, (so acceptable to God, and so richly rewarded by him,) that *He did not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform.* Rom. iv. 20, 21. It was the Israelites' great offence that so incensed God, that *They spake against God; saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed: can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?* Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20. Our Saviour upon this account took it ill of his disciples, that in the greatest dangers they should be afraid, or in the least manner distrust. Since nothing is impossible, nothing difficult to him, (that can be done, or which he will promise,) we should not, in respect of any difficulty or improbability appearing, doubt in the least; it is injury to him, it is folly, it is blasphemy to do it. Matt. viii. 26; xiv. 31.

We should hence dread God; fear to oppose his will, or provoke his displeasure. Is it not a madness for impotency (such as ours) to contend with or withstand Omnipotency, that can so easily

[1] οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον, οὐδ' ἀπατηλόν,
Οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητόν γ', ὅ τι κεν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσω.—
Hom. Il. α' 526.

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Jer. x. 6, 7. crush us into misery, into nothing? *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not* Jer. v. 22. *fear thee, O King of nations? Fear you not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea,* &c. It is the argument by which Moses enforces Deut. x. 17. obedience to the Law, for that *The Lord is a great God, a mighty and a terrible.* Our Saviour ad- Luke xii. 5. monishes and inculcates earnestly, *Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: I* 1 Cor. x. 22. *say unto you, Fear him. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?* St Paul urges; *are we stronger than* 1 Pet. v. 6. *he?* No, let us follow St Peter's advice, and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. But I leave these and other applications, easily emergent from these points of doctrine, to your further meditation.

It may be demanded, why, beside that of *Almighty*, no other attribute of God is expressed in our Creed? why, for instance, the perfections of infinite wisdom and goodness are therein omitted? I answer,

1 That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him; for he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictious to himself; *Deum negaret*, as Tertullian speaks, *auferendo quod Dei est*[m]; *He would deny God, withdrawing what belongs to God.*

2 The title παντοκράτωρ, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer

[m] Adv. Marc. i. 3. [Opp. p. 367 A.]

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all Divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us; which added to the name of God doth determine what God we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and therewith doth govern the world.

3 I might add, thirdly, That the doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light, as those attributes discovered in the world, (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with more plausibility,) it was therefore convenient to add it, as a matter of faith clearly and fully (as we did shew) attested unto by Divine revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple. I proceed.

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

This clause is one of those which was of later times inserted into this Creed; none of the more ancient expositors thereof (Augustin, Ruffin, Maximus Taurinensis, Chrysologus, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But Irenæus, Tertullian, and other most ancient writers, in their rules of faith exhibit the sense thereof; and the confessions of all general councils (the Nicene, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it, not only thereby to disavow and decry those prodigious errors of Marcion and Manichæus, and other such heretics, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some part thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another God, or Principle, inferior in worth and goodness to that God which is revealed in the Gospel; or did opinionate two Principles, (not distinct only, but contrary to

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each other,) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things. But also for that the creation of the world is that peculiar, august, and admirable work of God, by which we learn that he is, and what he is; by which, I say, his existence is most strongly proved, and in which his Divine perfections are most conspicuously displayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently is the chief ground of natural Religion; of our subjection and duty and devotion toward him. This title also most especially characterizing and distinguishing that God whom we believe and adore from all false and fictitious deities: for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens:* and the Prophet Jeremiah; *The gods that have not made the heavens, and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens:* and, *We preach unto you,* said St Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians, *that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.* There was reason therefore more than sufficient, that the Creed should be enlarged and enriched with this so material insertion; that we should be obliged explicitly to acknowledge a point of so grand consideration and use. For the explication whereof and the terms wherein it is conceived,

Ps. xcvi. 5.

Jer. x. 11. Vid. 2 Kings xix. 15. Acts xiv. 15; xvii. 24.

We may observe, first, that the ancient Hebrews having (as it seems) in their language no one word properly signifying the world, (or universal system of things created[a],) did use instead thereof

[a] Σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων: it is Aristotle's definition of the world.—De Mund. cap. II.

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a collection of its chief parts, (chief either absolutely in themselves, or in respect to us,) the heaven and the earth; adding sometimes the sea; (yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining to heaven its host, to earth its fulness, to the sea its contents;) but most frequently heaven and earth are put to design the whole: *In six days,* saith Moses, *the Lord made heaven and earth: Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord: It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail: God,* saith St Paul, *that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth:* where the world, and all things therein, doth signify the same with heaven and earth, God's dominion being coextended with his creation, as being grounded thereon. By heaven and earth therefore, I say, we are to understand those two regions, superior and inferior, into which the whole frame of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in, belong unto, are comprehended by them; as we see sometimes fully expressed; *O Lord, thou art the God that hast made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all things being in them,* pray the Apostles in the Acts; and with utmost distinction the Angel in the Apocalypse swears *By him that liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth with the things that therein are, and the sea with the things therein.*

Ps. lxix. 34. Neh. ix. 6. Gen. i. 1. Exod. xx. 11. 2 Kings xix. 15. Jer. xxiii. 24. Luke xvi. 17. Acts xvii. 24. Vid. Isai. xlii. 5. Acts iv. 24. Rev. x. 6.

By heaven is then understood all the superior region encompassing the earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance unconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts, furniture, and inhabitants; not only those that are visible and

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material, but also those that are immaterial and
Col. i. 16. invisible. *By him,* saith St Paul, *were created all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible and those that are invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him:* that is, not only the material and sensible parts, (those bright and beautiful lamps of light exposed to our sight,) but those beings of a more pure and refined substance, indiscernible therefore to our sense, how eminent soever in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence[b] is in those superior regions, as being God's courtiers and domestic officers, attending upon and
Heb. i. 14. ministering unto him; encircling his throne, as it
Dan. vii. 10. is in the Apocalypse[c], and always beholding his
Rev. v. 11. face, as our Saviour teaches us; even these all were
Matt. xviii. 10. made by God: for they are included in the universal term all: if God made all things in heaven, (as we heard it told us by the mouth of an angel in St John's Revelation,) then certainly the angels, the most considerable things therein. And they
Job ii. 1; xxxviii. 7. are expressly called the sons of God, (as deriving
Ps. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1. their being from him;) and they are subject to God's government and jurisdiction, (which argues their proceeding from him and dependence upon
Jude 6. him:) and St Jude tells us, they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχήν, their beginning or primitive state: wherefore they had a beginning; and whence that
1 Tim. vi. 16. but from God, who alone (originally, intrinsically, and necessarily) hath immortality, and consequently

[b] Ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, (as S. Jude 6, hath it,) *proper habitation.*

[c] Κυκλόθεν τοῦ θρόνου.—Rev. v. 11.

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(as Aristotle[d] proveth by several reasons against Plato) alone hath eternity: and the Psalmist calls them God's works; *Bless the Lord,* saith he, *ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word: bless the Lord, all his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure:* then concluding and recapitulating, he adds, *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion:* and again, in the 148th Psalm, summoning all the creation to a consort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, and then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts, and inhabitants belonging to each: and in the first place reckoning the angels, then the stars, then the heaven of heavens, he subjoins the reason, why they ought all to praise God; *Let them,* saith he, *praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree* (concerning them) *which shall not pass.* Thus doth the Scripture teach us concerning the existence and original of those sublime beings, to the knowledge of whom (that they are, what they are, whence they are) natural light could not reach; although from primitive tradition even the Heathens themselves did in a manner acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferior and secondary gods the children of the first and supreme God, as we did formerly touch; Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς πατήρ τε[e]: so God speaks to them in Plato's Timæus.

Ps. ciii. 20, 21, 22.

concert.

And for all other things, both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the world, with all

[d] De Cœlo, I. cap. ult.

[e] [Tim. 41 A.]

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its parts, compacted together in so fair, so fit, so fast an order, we have before sufficiently discoursed, that they speak themselves, even to natural understanding, to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent author[f]; that is, by God; which is confirmed by testimonies of Holy Writ innumerable, and which need not to be repeated. And thus much (as we did also formerly shew) the generality of mankind hath always consented unto; as also the most and best reputed philosophers did (in general terms) avow it.

There is only one particular, wherein they seem to have disagreed (some or most of them) from what Christian piety obliges us to acknowledge; which concerns the matter of corporeal things. For even Plato himself (who so positively and expressly doth assert the world to have been framed by God) is yet conceived to suppose the matter of things to have been eternal and uncreated; ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into a good order, agreeable to some patterns preexistent in his wise understanding; even as a good artist doth out of an unshapen lump of matter frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some idea preconceived in his mind[g]. *Socrates and Plato,* saith Plutarch[h], *did suppose three principles of things, God, matter, idea: God is the mind; Matter the first subject of generation and*

[f] Vid. Comment. [Gatak.] in M. Ant. pag. 145.

[g] Vid. Tertull. adv. Hermog. cap. I. [Opp. p. 233 C.] et adv. Valent. cap. XV. [p. 257 A.]

[h] De Placit. I. 3. [Opp. Tom. IX. p. 480. Ed. Reisk. The passage is given in the original. Vol. V. p. 362.]

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corruption; Idea an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God. Anaxagoras also (the same author[i] tells us, and Aristotle confirms it in his Metaphysics[j], commending his opinion) did affirm two principles, one passive, matter, (consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape,) the other active, understanding; and to the same effect he reduces Pythagoras's conceits, though with much obscurity expressed. Thales his conceit was also in a manner the same; who, as Tully tell us, *Aquam dixit esse initium rerum: Deum autem eam mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret*[k]. The Stoics[l] also had this opinion; as Lipsius by many testimonies proves in his Physiologia Stoica[m]. And Aristotle tells us, that generally all natural philosophers before him did conceive and assume it for a principle, (it was *κοινὴ δόξα τῶν φυσικῶν, ὡς οὐ γινομένου οὐδενὸς ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος*[n],) that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing made had necessarily some pre-existent matter, out of which it was made[o]; which principle Aristotle himself not only admits, in his sense, but extends further, affirming it impossible, that any thing should be produced out of matter not predisposed to admit the form to be

[i] [Ibid. p. 474.]

[j] [I. 3, 4,]

[k] De Nat. Deor. [I. 10, 25.]

[l] *Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τῶν ὅλων δύο, τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον. τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον οὐσίαν τὴν ὕλην, τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν, τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸν Θεόν.*—Laert. in Zen. [VII. 1, 68.] Vid. Sen. Epist. LXV. [24.]

[m] [Lib. I. cap. 4.]

[n] [Phys. Auscult. 1, 4. § 2.]

[o] *Τὸ μὲν ἐκ μὴ ὄντων γίνεσθαι, ἀδύνατον· περὶ γὰρ ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δόξης ἅπαντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως.*—[Ibid. § 3.]

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introduced, *οὐδὲ γίνεται ὁτιοῦν ἐξ ὁτουοῦν*[p]: *Every thing is not made of every thing; but out of some subject fitted thereto, or capable thereof; as animals and plants out of their seeds*[q]. Which principles, being deduced from observation of natural effects, (or works of art,) performed always by alterations and transpositions of some subjacent matter, we may safely, in respect only to such kind of effects, admit; allowing no natural agent, no created artificer able to produce any thing without some subject, aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence. But hence to conclude generally, that every action possible doth necessarily require a matter preexistent, or predisposed subject, is nowise reasonable; because such a thing doth not usually, according to the course of nature, happen, therefore it is in itself absolutely impossible to be, is no good collection; no logic will allow us from particular experiments to establish general conclusions; especially such as concern absolute impossibility of things to be otherwise, than sometimes they appear to be: there may be, for all we can know, agents of another sort, and powers much differing in kind and manner of efficacy from those which are subject to our observation. Especially to suppose the Supreme Being (that made the world) can himself act no otherwise, than we see these inferior things do, is grossly vain; nor from any

[p] Phys. I. 5.

[q] Ἀεὶ ἐστί τι ὃ ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος.—Phys. [I. 7.] Vide locum luculentum. Metaph. I. 3.

Erit aliquid, quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat: quis hoc physicus dixit unquam?—Cic. de Div. II. [16, 37.] Vid. M. Anton. IV. § 4.

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certain principle of reason can it ever appear, that it is impossible some substances should be totally produced *de novo*, or receive an existence which they had not. We cannot derive any such proposition from sense: it assures us, that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impossible: that which we see done is possible; but what we cannot perceive done is not therefore impossible: nor can any reason of ours reach the extent of all powers and possibilities. That opinion therefore of the ancient philosophers, that the matter of the world, or of natural things, is eternal and uncreated, had no certain foundation: we may say to them, as our Saviour once did to the Sadducees; *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God:* and that their opinion was indeed false, and contrary to our faith, may appear, because,

Matt. xxii. 29.

1. It is so often generally affirmed in Holy Scripture, that God did make all things; all things that are in heaven and in earth: it is unsafe, and not without great reason ever to be done, to make limitations and restrictions of universal propositions, often (yea constantly) so set down. And like as St Paul somewhere discourses, because it is said in the Prophets, *Every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed; Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;* therefore both Jews and Greeks (in case of belief and calling upon God) are capable of salvation and acceptance; οὐ γάρ ἐστι διαστολή, for that there is no distinction or exception made: so it being said universally and without any limitation, all things were made, therefore the matter of things was also

Rom. xi. 36. Col. i. 16.

Rom. x. 11; x. 13.

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made; the matter being one thing, yea, in the opinion of most philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only the modes and affections thereof. Whence Aristotle[r] tells us, that most of the first philosophers did affirm nothing to be made, nothing to be destroyed, because matter did always exist and abide the same; as if nothing else in nature had any being considerable. If God therefore did not produce matter itself, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature: how then is he truly affirmed the maker of all things[s]?

2 Again; God is in like manner affirmed generally the true possessor and proprietor of all things, excepting none: how so, if he did not make them? Is not this expressed the foundation of his right and dominion? *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them:* how is God, I say, Lord and owner of matter, (at least by the most excellent sort of right,) but for that he did produce and doth sustain its being, and therefore may justly use and dispose of it according to his pleasure[t]?

Ps. lxxxix. 11.

3 Again; supposing any being eternal, unmade, and independent upon God, doth advance that being in some respect to an equality with God,

[r] Phys. I. 8. Metaph. I. 3. [The passages are given at length, Vol. v. p. 368.]

[s] Vid. Lactantii disputationem hac de re.—Instit. II. 9.

[t] Sic enim Hermogeni respondendum est, cum ex domino defendit Deum materia usum, et de re non sua, scilicet non facta ab ipso.—De alieno ergo usus, aut precario usus est, qua egens ejus: aut et injuria qua prævalens ejus.—Tertull. adv. Hermog. cap. IX. [Opp. p. 236 D.]

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(imparting those great attributes of God thereto;) and it deprives him of those perfections, making him to depend upon it in his operations, and not all-sufficient in himself without it: it derogates from his prerogative, and limits his power[u].

4 Further, as Aristotle[v] well discourseth against the ancient philosophers, who, before Anaxagoras, did assign but one principle to things, that material and passive one, as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him and them together. If God did produce and insert an active principle into nature, (as who can well imagine those admirable works of nature, the seminal propagation and nutrition of plants; the generation, motion, sense, appetite, passion of animals to be performed by a mere blind agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, disposing and determining it toward the production of such specific effects?) if God could, I say, produce such an active principle, (such an ἐντελέχεια,* to use the philosopher's word,) why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is?

5 Further, if God did produce immaterial beings, (simple and uncompounded substances, distinct from all matter,) such as angels and the souls of men, merely out of nothing, (for out of what preexistent substance could they be made?)

[u] Quis alius Dei census quam æternitas?—[Id. ibid. cap. IV.]

Veritas sic unum Deum exigit defendendo, ut solius sit quicquid ipsius est.—[Id. ibid. cap. V.]

Nemo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non subjicitur ei cujus eget, ut possit uti—Et nemo qui præstat de suo uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui præstat uti.—[Id. ibid. cap. VIII.]

[v] Cf. Metaph. I. 3.

* opp to δύναμις,

then may he as well create matter out of nothing[x]. What greater difficulty can we conceive in making such a lower imperfect thing, than in making those more excellent beings, so much further, as it were, removed from nonentity? If any thing be producible out of nothing, why not all things capable of existence, by a virtue omnipotent? But that such immaterial beings were produced by God, we saw before from many plain testimonies of Divine revelation.

6 I add, that the manner of God's making the world, delivered in Scripture, by mere will and command; (*He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;*) that by only pronouncing the word *fiat*, all things should be formed and constituted in their specific natures and perfections, doth argue that matter might be produced out of nothing by Divine power: as also the effecting miracles, contrary to the course of nature, (without any preparation or predisposition of the suscipient matter,) in the same manner, by saying only, as our Saviour did; Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will; be thou cleansed: Woman, great is thy faith:* Γενηθήτω σοι, ὡς θέλεις, *Be it to thee as thou desirest:* Νεανίσκε, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι, *Young man, I say to thee, wake;* doth shew the same. For it is nowise harder, nor more impossible, to produce matter itself, than to produce a form therein, without or against its aptitude to receive it: nay, it seems more difficult to make children to Abraham out of stones, than to make them out

Ps. xxxiii. 9.

Luke v. 13. Matt. xv. 28. Luke vii. 14.

Matt. iii. 9.

[x] Immo cur non omnia, ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo? nisi si insufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo.—Id. ibid. [cap. xv.]

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of nothing: there being a positive obstacle to be removed; here no resistance appearing; there being as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as something new to be produced. Especially, I say, considering that God uses no other means or instruments in these productions, than his bare word and command; which why should we not conceive as able immediately to produce the matter, as the forms of things?

7 Lastly, the text of Moses, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth; *In the beginning*, saith he, *God made heaven and earth: now the earth was without form:* first, it seems, God made the matter of heaven and earth, devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested and distinguished its parts; by several degrees raising thence all those various kinds, those well-arrayed hosts of goodly creatures[y]. Gen. i. 2.

From these premises we may conclude against those philosophers, who, destitute of the light of revelation, did conceive otherwise; and against such Christians as have followed them; (as Hermogenes, whom Tertullian hath, upon this occasion, writ a discourse against, and some Socinians, Volkelius, &c.) that God did create, (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word,) produce out of nothing, either immediately or mediately bestow total existence upon every thing that is, not excepting any one[z]; and that this is

[y] Scriptura terram primo factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut et cœlum primo factum professa, *In principio fecit Deus cœlum*, dehinc dispositionem ejus superinduxit.—Id. ibid. cap. XXVI.

[z] Nihil sine origine, nisi Deus solus.—Id. adv. Marc. Lib. v. cap. I.

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the true meaning of these words, *Maker of heaven and earth,* which is ascribed here to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; a truth, which all good Christians have always acknowledged, and the Holy Scriptures do most plainly avouch, (for, *To us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we from him; and one Lord Jesus Christ,* (his Son), *by whom are all things, and we by him;*) though Marcion of old (and other Gnostical heretics before and after him) did contradict it, affirming that the God who made the world, and enacted the law, whom Moses did declare, was a worse conditioned, a rigid and angry God; but the God of the Gospel was another more benign and harmless God, void of all wrath and spleen. Tertullian thus in verse describes this conceit.

1 Cor. viii. 6.

> **Prædicat hic duos esse patres, divisaque regna,**
> **Esse mali causam Dominum qui condidit orbem,**
> **Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam,**
> **Quique dedit legem, et vatum qui voce locutus;**
> **Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,**
> **Crudelem, durum, belli cui sæva voluptas,**
> **Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis.**
> **Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam,**
> * * * * * *
> * * * * * *
> **Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat, æque**
> **Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.**[a]

Of affinity to this was the error of the Manichees, who supposed two first causes of things, one of good, the other of bad, taken, it seems, from the Persian, Egyptian, or other Ethnical doctrines, which to this purpose we may see recited by Plutarch, in his tractate *de Iside et Osiride*[b]: the Per-

[a] Adv. Marc. Poem. I. [inter Tertull. Opp. p. 629.]

[b] [Opp. Tom. VII. p. 456—460. Ed. Reisk.]

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sian, from Zoroaster, he tells us, had their Oromazes and Arimanius; the Egyptians their Osiris and Typhon; the Chaldeans their good and bad planets; the Greeks their Zeus and Hades; the Pythagoreans their Μονὰς and Δυάς; Empedocles his Concord and Discord, &c. The common reason or ground upon which erroneous conceits were built was this; that there being in nature some things imperfect and bad, these could not proceed from perfect goodness; it would have produced all things in highest perfection and in indefectible state of goodness. *If,* discourseth Plutarch there, expressing the main of their argument, *nothing naturally can arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil, as well as good: and thus it seems to the most and wisest: for they indeed conceive two gods, as it were, counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better one* God; *the other,* Dæmon[e]. But this discourse hath two great faults: it supposeth something imperfect and evil, which is not truly so; and that which is truly imperfect and evil it assigneth to a wrong cause.

It supposeth some things according to their original constitution imperfect and evil, which is false: there was no creature which did not at first pass the Divine approbation; *God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good:* good; that is, convenient and suitable to its design, fair and decent

Gen. i. 31.

[e] De Isid. et Osirid. [Opp. Tom. VII. p. 456. Ed. Reisk.—The passage is given at length. Vol. v. p. 377.]

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in its place and proportion: very good; that is, altogether perfect in its degree, without any blemish or flaw, not liable to any just exception. There be, indeed, degrees of perfection, (it was fit there should be such in great variety, that things might commend and illustrate each other;) some things may comparatively be said to be imperfect, or less excellent in respect of others, but nothing is positively bad or imperfect, void of that perfection due to its nature and kind. Every thing contributes something to the use and ornament of the whole; no weed that grows out of the earth, no worm that creeps upon the ground, but hath its beauty, and yields some profit; nothing is despicable or abominable, though all things not alike admirable and amiable. There is nothing therefore unfit or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which doth not in some sort and degree confer to the manifestation of his glorious wisdom, power, and goodness. *O Lord,* saith the devout Psalmist, after particular consideration of them, *how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: He created all things, that they might have their being: and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction in them,* saith the Hebrew Wise Man.

Ps. civ. 24.

Wisd. i. 14.

As for those real imperfections and evils, (moral evils, habitual distempers, irregular actions, with all the mischiefs consequent on them,) we need not seek any one eternal cause for them; (though order and uniformity do, disorder and confusion do not, argue any unity of cause whence they should proceed;) the true causes of them are notorious

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enough[d]; men, (or other intellectual agents,) their voluntarily declining from the way which God doth prescribe them; disobeying his laws and precepts, transgressing the dictates of their own reasons, abusing their own faculties, perverting themselves and others, (by their bad example, persuasion, allurement or violence;) these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable; they are called our ways, our works, our inventions; they are imputed altogether to us; we are blamed, we are punished for them. Nor need we to inquire after any other principle of them; (no Arimanius, no uncreated Cacodæmon, no eternal Fate to father them upon.)

As for other evils of grief and pain, incident to the nature or consequent upon the actions of any being, they are such as God himself (without any derogation to his goodness) may in his wisdom or justice be author of, for ends sometimes apparent to our understanding, sometimes surpassing its reach; it may suffice that God challengeth to himself the being cause of them; *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the mouth of the Most High? I am the Lord, and there is none else: I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.* For these evils, therefore, it is in vain to search for any other cause than God's just providence. But I will not trouble you further in considering the mistakes of those blind philosophers or blasphemous heretics.

Rom. xi. 33. Amos iii. 6. Lam. iii. 38. Isai. xlv. 5—7.

I will only briefly touch upon a consideration

[d] Mali nulla natura est; sed amissio boni, mali nomen accepit. —Aug. de Civ. Dei, xi. 9. [Opp. Tom. vii. col. 279 e.]

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or two (concerning the manner how and the reason why God did make the world) which will commend it to us, and ground somewhat of our duty, and direct our practice in respect thereto. The manner of God's producing the world was altogether voluntary, absolutely free[e]: it did not proceed from him as heat doth from the fire, or light from the sun, by a natural or necessary emanation[f], (as some philosophers have conceited, some later Platonists, and some Stoics,) but from his wise counsel and free choice. He could have abstained from making the
Rev. iv. 11. world; he could have made it otherwise. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημα σοῦ, and for* (or *by*) *thy will* (or *pleasure*) *they are and were created,* say the Elders in the Revelation. It is the property of God, St Paul
Eph. i. 11. tells us, to perform all things *According to the counsel of his will.* He could not be fatally determined, there being no superior cause to constrain him. He could not be obliged to impart any perfection, being master of all, and debtor to none: it would destroy all ground of our thankfulness and devotion, if God was not a free agent. And it is plain, if the world had been produced by necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as if the sun had been eternal, the light had been so. But that the world was produced in time, and that not long since, (within five or six thousand years,) not only faith and Divine chronology assure us, but reason also shews, and all history conspires to make

[e] Non potest aliter facere qui non facit nisi optima. Ipse est necessitas sua.—Sen. Nat. Qu Præf.

[f] Vid. Bas. [Hexam. Hom. I. Opp. Tom. I. p. 7 D.]

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us believe; there being no monuments or probable memory of actions beyond that time; and by what progressions mankind was propagated and dispersed over the world, how and when and where nations were planted, and empires raised, and cities built, and arts invented or improved, it is easy enough to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore, in respect of time conceivable by us, is very young; and not many successions of men's lives have passed between its beginning and ours: whence it is evident that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it the Scripture further teaches us; not with any laborious care or toil; not with help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions, but ψιλῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι, (as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks[g],) by his mere will and word; (these were the hands, as Tertullian expounds it[h], by which it is said God made the heavens;) at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing; at his command they obediently ranged themselves into order. It was not only a high strain of rhetoric in Moses, (as Longinus[i] supposed,) but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy which attends the Divine will and decree.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely, (and all wise agents act to some purpose, aim at some end,) why did God make the world? it may be asked; what reason induced him thereto? I answer with Plato, ἀγαθὸς ἦν: *Quæris quid propositum sit Deo? Bonitas; ita*

[g] [Cohort. ad Gentes, cap. IV. Opp. Tom. I. p. 54.]
[h] Adv. Hermog. cap. XLV. [Opp. p 249 A.] [i] [Sect. ix. 9.]

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certe Plato ait. Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; bono nulla cujusquam boni invidia est[k]*: He was good:* his natural benignity and munificence was the only motive that incited (or invited) him to this great action of imparting existence and suitable perfection to his creatures respectively. No benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him: no accession of beatitude: he did not need any profit or pleasure from without himself, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself. *Our goodness doth not extend to God;* we cannot anywise advance or amplify him thereby; *Can a man,* saith Eliphaz, (can any creature,) *be profitable to God?* No: goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself; love is active and fruitful; highest excellence is void of all envy and selfishness and tenacity: these being intrinsical to God's nature, (for *God is love;* that is, essentially loving and good,) did dispose him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight, and comfort upon his creatures. Hence, *The earth,* saith the Psalmist, *is full of the goodness of the Lord;* that is, every creature therein is an effect thereof, partakes thereof in its being and enjoyments. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works; (his tender mercies, rachamavi, his bowels of affection;)* good and tender over all his works, as well in producing them as preserving them; in rendering them at first capable to receive good, as in providing for and dispensing good unto them. *That thou givest them they gather;* (it is spoken in respect to the

Ps. xvi. 2.

Job xxii. 2.

1 John iv. 8, 16.

Ps. xxxiii. 5; cxix. 64.

Ps. cxlv. 9.

Ps. civ. 28.

[k] Sen. Epist. LXV. [10.]

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whole university of creatures;) *thou openest thy hand, they are all filled with good:* it is from God's open hand (his immense bounty and liberality) all creatures do receive all that good which fills and satiates them. A glimpse of which truth the ancient heathens seemed to have when they delivered, (as Aristotle[1] tells us,) that love was the original principle of things: *πρώτιστον μὲν ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων,* is a verse he cites out of Parmenides. But I will not insist longer upon this point; only I shall briefly touch some uses the belief and consideration thereof will afford to us.

1 The belief thereof must necessarily beget in us the highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God and his excellencies. What a power must that be (how unconceivably great, both intensively and extensively!) that could erect so speedily, so easily, such a stupendously vast frame, (vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection we can make,) the earth we dwell upon, divided into so many great empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion as a little sand to the earth itself, or a drop to the great ocean! What a wisdom must that be, (how incomprehensibly large and penetrant,) that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures, (the artifice that appears in one, in the least of which, doth so far transcend our conceit,) could digest them so fitly, and connect them so firmly in such order! What a goodness and benignity must it be (how immense and boundless) that did

[1] Metaph. I. 4.

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extend itself in affection and care for so many creatures, providing abundantly for the needs and comfort of them all! How transcendently glorious is the majesty of him that was author of all those beauties and strengths, those splendours and magnificences, we with so much pleasure and so much astonishment behold! Well might the devout Psalmist and the divine Prophets hence so often take occasion to excite us to praise and celebrate the perfections of God: well might even heathen philosophers, from the contemplation of the world, be raised unto the composing of hymns and elogies of the great Maker of the world.

2 It also will confer to the begetting of humble love and affection and gratitude toward God. What can be more efficacious to this purpose than to consider, that all we have, all we with so much content and pleasure enjoy, (ourselves first, then all the accommodations and comforts we find,) did proceed from him[m]; did proceed with particular intention from especial good-will toward us; a most free good-will, moved with no merit of ours[n], no profit to himself? *When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* was the Psalmist's contemplation: that the author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean a thing as we, to visit us with a provident care of our welfare; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, grace, and goodness is this! What

Ps. viii. 3.

[m] Cogitavit nos ante natura, quam fecit.—Sen. de Benef. II. 23.

[n] Nimis nos suspicimus si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveantur.—Sen. de Ira, II. 27.

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an argument of love and thankfulness toward him! What is man? what, in comparison of him that made the world? What is our strength in respect of his, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality of ours? How weak, vain, narrow, poor, and wretched creatures must we needs seem to ourselves, when we seriously consider those excellencies displayed in the creation! How should this humble and depress us in our conceits concerning ourselves, especially if we reflect upon our ingratitude, our unprofitableness, our injustice toward the Author thereof; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him, who gave to us and all things their being, their all; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our service we have been; how frequently we have opposed his will and abused his goodness!

3 Further, it is an inducement to trust and hope in God, and a great consolation in all needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and was willing to do so much for us; he that because he made all things, can dispose of all, and doeth whatever pleaseth him in heaven and earth; shall we distrust or doubt of his protection and succour in our need? *My help,* saith the Psalmist, *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth:* well might he be assured, having recourse to so potent and faithful an aid: and again; *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God; which made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is.* The prophet Jeremiah begins his prayer thus; *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power*

Dan. iv. 35.

Ps. cxxi. 2; cxxiv. 8.

Ps. cxlvi. 5.

Jer. xxxii. 17.

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and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. The creation of the world is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may well support our faith in the greatest difficulties and distresses.

4 It is, finally, a general incitement to all obedience, which, from God's production of all things, doth appear due and reasonable. All other things obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course prescribed to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? shall all the hosts of heaven readily and punctually obey God's summons; shall the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof; shall the sea, with its proud waves, be confined by his decree; shall fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds, (such rude and boisterous things,) fulfil his words; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? But I leave the further improvement of this doctrine to your meditation, concluding with that exhortation of the Angel in the Revelation; *Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water:* even to him be all obedience, adoration, and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Isai. xlviii. 13.

Isai. xl. 26. Job ix. 5; xxvi. 11; xxxviii. 11. Jer. v. 22. Ps. cxlviii. 8.

Rev. xiv. 8.

THE first part of the Creed, concerning God the Father, we have largely insisted upon: the next in order (as is fit) succeeds that part thereof, which relates to his ever blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour; the faith in whom, that is, the believing him to be what he professed himself, what he and his first disciples did teach concerning him, is the

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principal and peculiar duty of our Religion as Christian, and distinct from all other Religions; the sum of which doctrine is contained in what follows; wherein our Saviour, the object of this faith, is described and determined unto us, first, by his proper name, *Jesus;* next, by his most notable and comprehensive title, *Christ;* then, by his relations, unto God first, *His only Son*, then unto us, *Our Lord;* lastly, by several illustrious accidents and circumstances appertaining to him, (his conception, nativity, passion, crucifixion, death, burial, descent into hell, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand:) which particulars I shall endeavour to prosecute somewhat more briefly.

Jesus.

This name, (not unusual among the Jews, for we read of divers in Scripture that bear it; *Jesus the son of Justus, Jesus the son of Sirach, Bar-Jesus;* and especially the famous *Jesus the son of Nun*, who, according to his name, saith Siracides, was great for the saving of God's elect; and many others so named occur in Josephus;) this name, I say, was, by God's direction, imposed upon our Saviour at his circumcision, for the significancy of it, as importing the performance of that great design for which he was sent into the world, the salvation of mankind from sin and misery; (for it is said, *The Son of man came to save the souls of men*, and *to save that which was lost:* that *God sent him into the world not to condemn the world; but that the world by him should be saved:* that *He came into the world to save sinners:*) this is the reason rendered by the Angel of this

Col. iv. 11.

Ecclus. xlvi. 1.

Luke ii. 31.

Luke ix. 56. Matt. xviii. 11. John iii. 17; xii. 47. 1 Tim. i. 15.

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Matt. i. 21. name being assigned to him: *She shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins:* from their sins, taking in all the causes and consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies which draw or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, the terror and anguish of conscience, the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them, the slavery under their dominion, the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them: from all these mischiefs he came to free and save us, and did actually perform his part in accomplishing that salvation; and was Luke i. 71. therefore properly called *Jesus*, or *The Saviour*. *To save us from our enemies*, (I say,) *and from the hands of all that hate us*, (so Zechariah in his Be- 1 John iii. 8. nedictus;) from the Devil first; *For this purpose*, saith St John, *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil;* those works Acts x. 38. of tempting and impelling us to sin: *He went about*, saith St Peter, *doing benefits, and healing all that were overpowered,* καταδυναστευομένους, (or *overruled*) *by the Devil*, (possessed by him, whether Heb. ii. 14. in body or mind:) *By his death*, the Author to the Hebrews tells us, *he did defeat him who had the* Matt. xii. 29. Luke xi. 21, 22. *power of death, that is, the Devil.* He combated and conquered this strong one, (this dreadful and mighty foe of ours,) and bound him, and disarmed him of his panoply, and spoiled all his baggage[a], leaving him unable (without our own fault, our baseness or negligence) to do us mischief (as is insinuated in Matt. xii. and Luke xi.) Our own

[a] Πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ.—Luke xi. 22.
Σκεύη αὐτοῦ διαρπάσαι.—Matt. xii. 29.

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fleshly desire, inclining us to vicious excess in sensual enjoyments, (another powerful and mischievous enemy of ours,) he by his grace, enlightening and strengthening us, doth save us from; *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, saith St Paul, *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.* And the world, (which often solicits and sometimes would force us to wickedness,) he delivers us from, vanquishing it in our behalf; *Be of good courage*, saith he, *for I have overcome the world: In all these things* (in the temptations and persecutions of all our enemies) *we do more than conquer, through Christ that loved us.* As for our conscience, it is the blood of Christ that cleanses it from the stain of guilt, that delivers it from the fear of punishment, as the Apostle to the Hebrews doth assure us. And the wrath of God toward us he hath appeased; so that *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:* and, *If, being enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:* we shall be saved from all condemnation and vengeance due to us; for *There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus—Jesus, that delivers us, ὁ ῥυόμενος, from the wrath to come.* In so many respects is this blessed Person our Jesus; saving us from all our enemies, our sins, our miseries; which he performs several ways, and in several respects may therefore be styled our Saviour.

Rom. viii. 2. John xvi. 33. 1 John v. 4. Rom. viii. 37. Heb. ix. 14. Heb. ii. 15. Rom. v. 9, 10. Rom. viii. 1. 1 Thess. i. 10.

1 By his conduct of us into and in the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave captains, who by their wisdom and valour have freed their people from straits and

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oppressions. So generally were those judges and captains, who anciently delivered Israel, called; *In the time of their trouble,* said the Levites in their prayer in Nehemiah, *when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy:* so particularly are Othniel and Ehud called, and Moses signally; *The same,* saith St Stephen, *did God send to be* (ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτήν) *a commander and a saviour,* (or *redeemer;*) as he who by his happy conduct did free them from Egyptian slavery[b]. So is Jesus called ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας, *The Captain of our salvation,* ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς; *The Captain of life,* the chief Leader of us into the way of eternal life and salvation; ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, *The Captain of our faith,* he that brought us into the belief of that saving doctrine, which is *The power of God to salvation;* and these titles we find together attributed to him, *Him hath God exalted,* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and Saviour.* And thus hath he conducted us, first, by instruction; shewing and teaching us the way of salvation, (the doing of which we see often called saving, because it hath so much efficacy towards the effecting salvation,) God's gracious intentions of mercy towards us, the conditions of duty required by God from us, the great encouragements to saving obedience and determents from destructive disobedience; the whole will of God, and concernment of man respecting salvation, he hath revealed unto us; *No man hath*

Neh. ix. 27.

Judges iii. 9, 15. Acts vii. 35.

Heb. ii. 10. Acts iii. 15. Heb. xii. 2.

Rom. i. 16.

Acts v. 31.

Rom. xi. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 22. 1 Tim. iv. 16. James v. 20.

John i. 18.

[b] Thus Demetrius, by the Athenians, was entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτήρ; for delivering them from the Macedonian subjection, and restoring to them their liberty.

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ever seen God, (not his face or nature, not his purpose and pleasure,) *the only begotten Son, being in the bosom of the Father,* (ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο,) *he hath reported and expounded him unto us:* all that excellent doctrine, which he that heartily believes and faithfully practises according to, shall infallibly be saved, he was the first author and doctor of: *God saved and called us,* as St Paul tells us, *with a holy call,* (called us out of the way of error and wickedness and misery, into the way of truth and righteousness and happiness[c],) *according to his purpose and grace,* (his gracious design,) *that was bestowed upon us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but being now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.* By him the σωτήριος χάρις, *The grace of God that bringeth salvation did appear unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and piously, in this world.* 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Tit. ii. 11, 12.

Neither by his doctrine only, but by his example and real performance he hath conducted us in the same blessed path: he hath resolutely marched before us through all the most difficult and dangerous passages; charging, beating back, and breaking through all the forces of our enemies; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the world, and powerfully subduing the most malicious rage of hell. *O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory by our Lord Jesus Christ.* Victory 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.

[c] Ἵνα γένηται πρωτότοκος ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ ὁδοποιήσῃ τῇ ἀνθρώπου φύσει εἰς ἀφθαρσίας ὁδόν.—Cyr. Alex.

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and salvation (from death and hell) we shall be
1 Pet. ii. 21. certain of, if we pursue his steps, and do not basely
Heb. xii. 1, 2. or falsely desert so good a leader; *If with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and perfecter of our faith, Jesus; who for the joy proposed unto him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raise and inflame any courage, to see his commander adventure so boldly upon all dangers, to endure so willingly all hardships?

2 But he was also further (in a more excellent and peculiar manner) our Saviour, in that he purchased for us salvation, freeing us from the captivity we were detained in, from the obnoxiousness to punishment we were subjected to, by yielding himself a ransom for us, offering his life a sacrifice for our sins, procuring by his merit and suffering, in our stead and behalf, the pardon of our sins,
Acts v. 31. and reconciliation with God: *Him,* say Peter and the Apostles, *hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repent-*
1 Tim. ii. 6. *ance to Israel and remission of sins: He gave*
Matt. xx. 28. *himself, ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, a ransom instead*
Eph. i. 7. *of all: We have redemption through his blood, the*
Col. i. 14. Vid. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his*
1 Pet. ii. 24. *grace: He bare himself our sins in his own body*
Heb. ix. 14. *upon the tree: He by the eternal Spirit offered up himself* a spotless sacrifice *to God,* being thereby a
1 John ii. 2; iv. 10. *propitiation*[d] *for our sins and the sins of the whole*
Rom. iii. 25. *world: God by him did reconcile the world unto*
2 Cor. v. 19. *himself, not imputing unto them their transgressions.*
Col. i. 20.

[d] *Ἱλασμός.*—1 John ii. 2; iv. 10.
Ἱλαστήριον.—Rom. iii. 25.

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Thus doth the Scripture declare Jesus to have been our Saviour.

3 He is, thirdly, our Saviour by communication of spiritual strength and power, whereby we are enabled to resist and overcome the enemies of our soul and our salvation, freeing us from the dominion of sin and Satan. Our own reason, however aided by exterior instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those powerful temptations, oppositions, and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful Spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us, in all our religious practice and welfare; so that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. By our faithful embracing Christ's doctrine and yoke, *Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, so that we henceforth should not serve sin.* Sin shall no longer lord it over us, because *We are not under the law, but under grace: being freed from sin, we are subjected to righteousness, and made servants to God; having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life: The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed us from the law of sin and of* death. Thus is Jesus our Saviour.

Rom. vi. 6, 14, 18, 22.

Rom. viii. 2.

4 He is so, lastly, by final conferring upon us, and crowning us with salvation. He not only led us in the way, and hath purchased for us the means, and helps us in the prosecution, and hath promised unto us, but will actually bestow upon us, (as a gracious reward of our faithful and constant adherence to him,) eternal joy and happiness:

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2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that*

Heb. vii. 25. *shall have loved his appearance: He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them:*

John xvii. 2; *Thou hast given him* (thou, O Father, to thy Son Jesus hast given) *the power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to all that thou hast given him,* (that is, to all who by God's grace have per-

xvii. 22. sisted in faithful obedience to him:) *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given unto them.*

Heb. xii. 2. Thus is he the ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτής, the beginner, carrier on, and accomplisher of our salvation; and therefore most appositely was named Jesus; the name which anciently that most valiant and successful captain did bear, who did of all most lively represent and presignify him, and had therefore questionless by God's secret providence this name assigned him.

I need not now much to mind you what respect, what love, what gratitude the very mention of this name, the consideration of these benefits towards us implied thereby, should beget in us. He that should freely, with great inconvenience to himself, come out of his own way to shew us ours, bringing us out of a road tending unto certain destruction into a most pleasant and safe way, surely leading unto the end of our desires, we should think ourselves much obliged unto: he that should draw us out of a wretched slavery, destitute of all ease, comfort, or hope, by frankly yielding up him-

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self a ransom for us, we could not know how sufficiently to value his kindness toward us: he that, when we were sentenced to death, (a death of torment endless and remediless,) should not only expose his life for our delivery, but undergo willingly a painful and disgraceful execution in our stead; what should we think of his friendship? what expression could reach it? he, lastly, that from a state of extreme penury, baseness, and disconsolance, should raise us to the highest pitch of wealth, dignity, and happiness, how could we worthily thank him, how love or honour him enough? This and much more, much more than we can conceive or express, hath Jesus done for us: well therefore ought our hearts to melt with affection in thinking of him, our knees to bend with reverence at the mention of his name. It concerns us also to take care that his so excellent endeavours for our salvation be not frustrated; that he be, as well in effect, as design and virtue, our Saviour. What a folly were it, what a crime to neglect (to render useless and ineffectual) so great salvation!

John xv. 13.

Heb. ii. 3.

Christ.

It is a title or name importing office and dignity, the same with Messias; this in Greek, that in Hebrew, signifying the Anointed. Of ancient times, in the eastern countries, (abounding as with good oil, so with many delicate odoriferous spices,) it seems, by Hazael's inunction, to have been the manner (it was so, however, among the Jews) to separate (or consecrate) persons (and things too, I might add) designed to great and extraordinary

1 Kings xix. 15.

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employments, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; symbolizing, (or denoting,) it seems, thereby both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts, qualifying them for their employment, and a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them, from the use of things and the performances of persons so sanctified. *Thy name,* saith the Spouse in the Canticles, *is an ointment poured forth;* that is, very delightful and acceptable; and so were those offices hoped to be, to which men by such unction were consecrated. We find especially three sorts of persons to whom this consecration did belong by Divine appointment; kings, and priests, and prophets; who are therefore (all of them) styled God's anointed; kings and priests more frequently, but sometimes also prophets; *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;* where prophets and anointed do seem to denote the same thing, and to expound one the other; for Abraham (whom with the other patriarchs those words do concern) is called a prophet, and because so, seems here styled God's anointed. Of priests: though at first all the sons of Aaron were thus consecrated, according to that law, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office;* yet they tell us, that afterward, in all course of times, only the high-priest was so consecrated, whence the anointed, or the priest that is anointed, did signify the high-priest, (in distinction to other inferior priests.) Of kings: all that succeeded in the kingdom of Israel, in a legal and orderly course, and those whom God did himself by extraordinary

Vid. Exod. xxx. 23, &c.

Cant. i. 3. Vid. Ps. cxxxiii.

1 Chron. xvi. 22.

Gen. xx. 7.

Exod. xl. 15; xxx. 30.

Lev. iv. 3, 5, 16.

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designation confer that dignity upon, were so separated, (as Hazael and Jehu.) Prophets; we do not find, that they were commonly, or according to any rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of Elisha substituted to Elijah in this manner, it seems, as being a prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater performances than common prophets were. Now whereas the people of the Jews were by prophetical admonitions brought into an opinion and hope, that in times to come God would send an extraordinary prophet; *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him;* a prophet, who should establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and is therefore called *The messenger of the covenant,* who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, should enlighten and convert the Gentiles, who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted, according to many passages concerning him in the Prophets; as for instance that in Isaiah, cited by St Luke, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,* &c. and that in the same Prophet, alleged by St Matthew, *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: he shall not cry,* &c.: which being inspired, is the qualification of a prophet: and such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of comfort and counsel from God, are the proper

1 Kings xix. 15.

1 Kings xix. 16.

Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

Mal. iii. 1.

Isai. lxi. 1, Luke iv. 18.

Isai. xlii. 1. Matt. xii. 18.

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offices of a prophet, (that is, of an especial minister and agent sent by God to transact his affairs with men, and shew them his pleasure). This person also the Jews did from the same instructions expect to be a Prince, who should govern them in righteousness and in prosperity; endued with power to deliver them from all oppression and slavery, to subdue their enemies, and reduce all nations under subjection to their laws; according to those predictions; *Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness,* &c. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies:* and, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth; in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:* and, *It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them: And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall be upon him,* &c.—*he shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious:* and many more places clearly speak to the same purpose. That this great person also should be a Priest, they did or might have learned from the same Prophets; for of him Zechariah thus foretold; *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold the man whose name is The Branch,* (a name in so many places appropriated to the Messias;) *and he shall grow*

Isai. xxxii. 1.
Ps. cx. 2.
Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15.
Jer. xxx. 8, 9.
Vid. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, &c.; xxxvii. 24.
Hos. iii. 5.
Isai. xi. 1, 2, 10.
Vid. Isai. ix. 7; xvi. 5.
Zech. vi. 12, 13.

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up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. Of him also David spake; *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* Ps. cx. 4. From divers passages also concerning his performances of propitiation and benediction, they might have collected the same. It is no wonder then that the ancient Jews (although the text of Scripture does not, except once in the ninth chapter of Daniel, apply this name of Christ or Messias to this person, so promised and prophesied of) did attribute especially this title to him, it seeming most proper of any, and most comprehensive, implying all the privileges, endowments, and performances belonging to him. Dan. ix. 25. It is observed that the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed by the priests, as an interpretation of the less exactly understood ancient Hebrew scripture, for the benefit and instruction of the people) doth expressly mention the Messias in above seventy places; and according to their expositions we see, that the people did confidently expect a person (under this name and notion) should come; *I know,* said the woman of Samaria, (so far had this belief extended,) *that the Messias comes; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things:* (observe, that they did promise to themselves a full declaration of all truth by the Messias.) John iv. 25. And when St John the Baptist did live and teach in a manner extraordinary, it is said, *That the people did expect,* Luke iii. 15.

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and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Christ or not: and when our Saviour's admirable works and discourses had convinced divers, they said, *When Christ cometh, shall he do greater miracles than this man hath done?* So that it is evident the belief and expectation of a Messias to come was general among them. And that, indeed, Jesus was such, in correspondency to all those prophecies, and the characters in them described and presignified; that he was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all these offices, prophetical, regal, and sacerdotal, the New Testament doth abundantly shew us; *Him,* saith St Peter, in general, *God anointed with the Holy Spirit and power;* not with external affusion of material oil, (that did only signify, as Cyrus also was not, who yet is called God's Messias,) but with real infusion of Divine grace and power, enabling him to execute all those great and extraordinary functions: with this gladsome oil he was thoroughly perfumed and replenished without measure: with this he was sanctified from the womb; when the power of the Highest did overshadow him, at or in his conception: with this, at his baptism, he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when the heavens were opened unto him, and the Spirit of God descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him: with this, in all the course of his life and ministry, he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, miraculous and glorious performances for the good and benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed

John vii. 31.

Acts x. 38.

Ps. xlv. 7.

Luke i. 35.

Luke iv. 1. John iii. 34.

Matt. iii. 16.

Acts x. 38.

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minds, discovered and diffused. He was by this made (in right and in effect) a Prophet, a King, a Priest.

1 A Prophet: for they were not mistaken, who (upon our Saviour's admirable raising the widow's child) were amazed, and glorified God, saying, *That a great Prophet was raised up among them, and, That God had visited his people:* nor the disciples, who called him *A Prophet, mighty in deed and speech before God and all the people:* nor they, who confessed, (in St John's Gospel,) *This is in truth the Prophet that is to come into the world.* An extraordinary commission he had from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by the express testimony of St John Baptist, by the performance of innumerable great signs and miraculous works, (arguments in the highest degree, to utmost possibility, sufficient to assert and confirm it;) he was in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function; by inspiration complete and unlimited, by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy, declared in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile, by an insuperable courage and constancy, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning goodness and sweetness, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, a most powerful awfulness and majesty expressed in all his demeanour and actions. And suitable to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person was the weight and the extent of his doctrine, concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, the reconciliation of God to the world, the entire will of God and whole duty of man, with all the covenants and conditions, the

Luke vii. 16.

Luke xxiv. 19.

John vi. 14.

1 Pet. ii. 22.

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promises and threatenings relating to our future state; mysteries never before revealed, decrees never to be reversed. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy about the constitution of one particular law or Religion, the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment and fate determined to this or that nation; but to the instruction and conversion of all people, the settling of a law universal and perpetual, the final doom of all the world, did his prophetical revelations extend. So was he a Prophet.

2 And a King also he is, such as the Prophets foretold he should be, who should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and restore the kingdom to Israel, that should enact laws, and reduce the nations into subjection to them; should erect a kingdom, and govern it in righteousness, peace, and prosperity, subduing and extirpating all the enemies thereof: a king not of this world, though over it; ruling not in external pomp and state, but by secret providence and power; not so much over the bodies and temporal estates, as in the hearts and consciences of men; not chiefly by outward compulsion and violence, but by inward allurement and persuasion: a king he is, indeed, over all the world: to the Lamb is to be ascribed all power and authority by every creature: he is truly styled *King of kings, and Lord of lords. God hath advanced him,* (ὑπερύψωσε,) *and hath given him a name* (that is, a title of dignity and authority) *above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven, or upon the earth, or under the ground.* Of him in a higher and exacter sense it was said than of Solomon, *All*

Amos ix. 11. Acts i. 6. Rev. v. 13; xix. 16; i. 5. Phil. ii. 9. Eph. i. 21. Col. ii. 10. Ps. lxxii. 11.

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kings fall down before him, all nations do serve him. All men whatever (all creatures) are his vassals, subject and tributary to him; *All power is given unto him in heaven and earth.* But in especial manner he is King over his Church, over that people whom by the sword of his word and prevalent operation of his Spirit he hath subdued to himself; (that mystical Sion, built upon the rock of his heavenly grace and truth, in which it is said, God will place his residence, and reign for ever; from whence the law shall go forth, and to which all nations shall flow.) Over this he reigns; having established most righteous and wholesome laws, which his subjects are obliged and enabled by him to obey; protecting them by legislation, by defence and protection, &c. from the invasions and insurrections of their enemies, (intestine enemies, their own lusts; outward enemies, the Devil and the world;) supporting them in their distresses and afflictions: also exercising judgment over all; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity; most just though very severe punishments upon obstinate offenders; most royal and liberal rewards to the faithful and obedient; lastly, restraining, defeating, and destroying all the enemies to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual: *Out of his mouth there goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; These mine enemies,* (he shall one day say,) *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me; He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Thus

Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27. John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2. Ps. cxxxii. 13. Mic. iv. 7, &c. Isai. ii. 2, &c. Rev. xix. 15. Ps. ii. 9. Matt. xxv. 31, &c. Luke xix. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Vid. Col. ii. 15.

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is he a King, endued with sovereign power, and crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences and exercising all functions suitable to regal dignity.

3 He is also a Priest, and that no ordinary
Heb. viii. 6. one: διαφορωτέρας τέτευχε λειτουργίας; *He hath obtained a more excellent function* than any other priest ever had. An oblation he once offered, in worth and efficacy surpassing all the sacrifices and
1 Pet. i. 18. oblations that ever were, or could be made, (all the fattest hecatombs that were ever sacrificed, all the
Heb. ix. 9. gold and precious stones that were ever offered, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled upon the altar, were but vile and sordid, ineffectual and unacceptable, in comparison thereto;) a willing
Heb. x. 5. John x. 15. Eph. v. 2. Heb. vii. 27, 26. oblation of his own most glorious body, (the temple of the Divinity;) of his most precious blood; of his dear life; of himself; his most innocent, most pure, most spotless, and unblemished self, for the propitiation of our sins, and reconciling us to God; an oblation that only could appease God's wrath and merit his favour.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal per-
1 John ii. 1. formance) intercede for the pardon of our sins; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with* (or *to*) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;* for the acceptance of our services, for the granting our requests,
Heb. v. 7. for grace and assistance, comfort and reward, and all spiritual advantages to be conferred upon us; thus pursuing the work of salvation by his pro-
Heb. vii. 25. Numb. vi. 23. pitiatory sacrifice begun for us; *Whence,* as the Apostle saith, *he is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come unto God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

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It is the duty also of a priest to mediate between God and man by atonement and intercession; so is he. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

He doth further, as a Priest, perform the office of blessing; blessing the people in God's name, blessing God in the people's behalf; as did that illustrious type of him, Melchizedek; *Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.* So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; he pronounced blessedness in his sermons; he blessed his disciples at his parting; and *God,* as St Peter tells us, *having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquity;* and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction; *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;* as the great Prophet and Doctor, as the sovereign King and Prince, as the High Priest and Advocate of his Church. So in all respects is Jesus a true and perfect Priest; and so, finally, in all respects is he God's anointed, the Christ of God. And, indeed, that he is so is the fundamental point of our Religion; which the Apostles did testify, and preach, and labour to persuade the world of; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us Christians; the consideration of which may serve to beget in us a practice answerable to our relations grounded thereupon. If he be such a Prophet, we must with attention and a docile mind hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady

1 Chron. xxiii. 13. Levit. ix. 22, 23.

Gen. xiv. 19, 20.

Luke xxiv. 50. Acts iii. 26. Eph. i. 3.

Matt. xxv. 34.

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belief to his doctrine; we must readily practise what he teaches us. If he be our King, we must perform all due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs. If he be our Priest, we must apply ourselves to him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf, sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by his sacrifice, the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession, all spiritual comfort, joy, and felicity in consequence upon his efficacious benediction; *Having* (it is the Apostle to the Hebrews his admonition) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* In a word, if Jesus be Christ, let us be Christians; Christians, not in name only, in outward profession, in our opinion; but in very deed and reality; in our heart, in our affection, in our practice: *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that confesseth him to be so) *depart from iniquity.*

Heb. x. 21, 22.

2 Tim. ii. 19.

His only Son.

That the Messias designed by God to come for the restoring of the Church and reformation of the world, was in especial manner to be the Son of God, seems to have been the common persuasion of the ancient Jews before our Saviour's appearance; as may be collected from divers expressions then used, wherein being the Christ, and being the Son of God, are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts of the same Person: as in the confessions

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of Nathanael; *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel:* of Martha; *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world:* of St Peter; *We have believed, and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:* and especially by that examination of the high priest; *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.* And that our Saviour was indeed so, the New Testament doth everywhere teach us; calling him not only at large the Son of God, but his μονογενὴς, (his *only begotten Son*;) his ἀγαπητὸς, (his *darling Son*;) his πρωτότοκος, (his *firstborn*;) his ἴδιος υἱὸς, (his *proper* and *peculiar Son*:) those epithets all implying somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this relation. Adam is called *The son of God;* and the angels are so entitled; and princes are somewhere styled *The children of the Most High;* and all men, especially all good men, yea all things, have God, in some sense, their Father: but all these in a manner (if we compare them with Christ's relation) are improper and inferior; for he is the only Son (or the only begotten Son) of God. Now we find, indeed, several reasons and respects for which he is called the Son of God: he is so in regard of his temporal generation, by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary: so the Angel doth expressly tell us; *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God:* a generation so wonderful and peculiar, without intervention of any father but God, is one ground of

John i. 49. John xi. 27. John vi. 69. Matt. xxvi. 63. Mark xiv. 61. Luke iii. ult. Ps. lxxxii. 6. Luke i. 35. Vid. Gal. iv. 4.

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this relation and title. He is also capable of this title by reason of that high office, the which by God's special designation and appointment he was instated in. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in dispensation of justice, as resembling him in exercise of power and authority) have been called Ps. lxxxii. 6. *Gods*, and *The children of the Most High*, in the John x. 34. Holy Scripture itself; with how much greater reason and truth may he (whom God hath sanctified and sent into the world, hath consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent and extraordinary office) be so called? It is our Saviour's own argumentation. He is also in regard of his resurrection by the Divine power (which is a kind of generation or a regeneration to another immortal life) so styled: if others are the children of Luke xx. 36. Col. i. 18. God, being the children of the resurrection, how Rev. i. 5. much more he, who is *The firstborn from the dead?* Acts xiii. 32, 33. Ps. ii. 7. And that of the Psalmist concerning Christ, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, according Acts xiii. 33. to St Paul's exposition, was fulfilled by God's raising Jesus again. Whereas it is said, that God did Heb. i. 2. appoint or make our Saviour *Heir of all things;* Eph. i. 22. did *put all things under his feet;* did *give him* John xvii. 1, 2. *power over all flesh;* did *commit to him all authority* Matt. xxviii. 18. *in heaven and upon the earth, having set him* Acts ii. 33. *at his right hand;* hath exalted him to the next Heb. i. 3. place of authority and dignity to himself, (*The right hand of the Majesty in the highest;*) and given him Phil. ii. 9. *a name above every name;* well may he in this Eph. i. 20, 21. respect be entitled the Son of God, as having obtained the rank and privilege proper to this relaGal. iv. 7. tion; *If a son, then an heir*, St Paul argues; and

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reciprocally, if constituted heir of all, then in that regard a son. In such respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly, styled the Son of God.

But his being so expressly called God's only begotten Son doth imply a ground more peculiar and more excellent (than any of these) of this relation, (as do also those especial prerogatives of affection and favour from God appropriated to him, with all the glorious preferment consequent thence, argue the same.) For the first Adam also derived his being immediately from God's power and Divine inspiration; Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist, had a generation extraordinary and miraculous, (as being born of aged fathers or barren mothers, by the interposition of Divine power;) and we cannot easily conceive how the production of angels should be so much inferior to our Saviour's temporal generation, (supposing he had no other.) And our Saviour, though he were the first and chief, yet was not the only son of the resurrection; nor doth the arbitrary collation of power and dignity, how eminent soever, seem to suffice: for, we see others, in regard to their designment and deputation to offices of power and trust, (though subordinate and inferior to him,) entitled the sons of God: (beside, that this is ground of a metaphorical rather than a natural and proper sonship:) and though our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he coheirs; whom, as St Paul speaks, *God hath together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of glory and bliss.* In these respects God hath many sons, (as the Author to the Hebrews tells us,) and our Saviour many brethren, (as it is in Romans viii.)

Rom. viii. 17. Eph. ii. 5, 6. Heb. ii. 10. Rom. viii. 29.

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We should therefore seek a more excellent and proper foundation of this only sonship; and such we may deduce from the testimony of Divine writ. It is evident thence, that our Saviour had an existence before his temporal generation; for he
John iii. 13. did descend from heaven, and was there before he did descend; (his ascension was but a returning thither, whence he had descended at his incarna-
John i. 15; viii. 58. tion;) he was before St John the Baptist; and therefore, as St John confesses, was worthily preferred before him. Before Abraham was born, he did subsist; (and therefore might without any absurdity affirm, that Abraham and he did see each other, might have intercourse together, as his own discourse with the Jews doth declare:) nay further, it is plain he was of standing, and had a glory before the world had a being: for he prays
John xvii. 5. thus; *And now, Father, glorify me with thyself with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee:* (glory; that is, a most honourable state of being and excellent perfection was not only designed him, but he really had it before the world
Heb. i. 2. was:) and needs must it be so; for by him God
Col. i. 16, 17. made the world; and himself made it: *By him,*
Eph. iii. 9. saith St Paul, *were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* He did not only create anew and reform mankind, but he created all things; and among them all degrees of angels, all things in heaven; such things as the new meta-
John i. 3, 10. phorical creation did not extend unto. *All things*

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were made by him, (or *did exist by him,*) *and without him there was not any thing made which was made,* saith St John: (and what could be said more expressly or clearly?) In fine, he did exist from all eternity: πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως; that is, *Born before all the creation:* as, *In the beginning was the Word:* in the beginning; that is, before any point of time designable or conceivable; that is, from eternity: whence he is truly styled, *The first and the last,* (ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος,) and *Alpha* and *Omega,* several times in St John's Revelation; (a phrase by which God's eternity and immortality are usually expressed.) He had therefore a being before his temporal generation, and that before all creatures, even from eternity: therefore that being was Divine: if no creature, if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then God: that action is proper, that attribute is peculiar to God; only God can be the Creator of all things: (*He that built all things is God;* none but God can be eternal; *He only hath immortality,* and only therefore hath eternity;) he is consequently said, before he did assume the form of a servant, and became like unto men, to have subsisted in the form of God, and not to have deemed it robbery to be equal (or in equality) to God; (so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of man's nature and properties, so before it he was truly God, partaker of the Divine essence and attributes;) and therefore he is frequently in the Scriptures called God, (in the most proper and highest sense:) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* God is said to have been

Col. i. 15. John i. 1. Rev. i. 17; ii. 8; xxii. 13. Isai. xli. 4; xlviii. 12; xliv. 6. Rev. i. 8. Heb. iii. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Phil. ii. 6, 7. Vid. Rom. viii. 33. John i. 1.

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1 Tim. iii. 16. *manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed into glory;* (of which positions it is evident, that the subject is Christ; he is therefore called God.) God is also said, by Acts xx. 28. St Paul, to *have purchased his Church with his* John xx. 28. *own blood;* who else did that but Christ? *My Lord and my God;* so St Thomas expressed his faith in Christ, (upon his conviction,) which our Saviour accepts and approves as a proper testi- 1 John v. 20. mony thereof. Also; *We are,* saith St John, *in the true one,* (the God of truth,) *in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and life eternal;* (no false, no metaphorical God, but the very true, Rom. ix. 5. supreme, ever-living God;) *Out of whom,* saith St Paul, *as concerning the flesh,* (according to his humanity,) *Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever;* ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς, *The God over all,* the supreme God, the Most High: *God, blessed for* Mark xiv. 61. *ever;* ὁ εὐλογητὸς, *The blessed one,* (which is a special and characteristical attribute or title of God.) Now this proper appellation, with the majesty and worship due thereto, as also the title 1 Tim. vi. 15. of Lord and King, *King of kings, and Lord of lords,* with the reverence and authority attending them; likewise the most Divine works of creation and providence, and judging the world; immediate working of miracles, remitting of sins; the Divine attributes of wise, good, powerful absolutely and perfectly; in a word, all things that the Father John xvi. 15. hath, (according to what our Saviour affirmed, *All things that the Father hath are mine;*) we cannot imagine that God, who is so jealous of his honour, (who will not give his glory to another,) would com-

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municate to any creature, how eminent soever in nature, (for the highest creature possible must however be infinitely distant from, infinitely inferior to, himself in perfection and dignity; nor can any be capable of it in nature, or in reason and justice accept such names, such characters, such prerogatives.) Now our Saviour being thus God, and the whole tenor of our Religion (with testimonies of Scripture frequent and obvious) asserting but one God, therefore our Saviour hath the same essence with God; and it must be necessarily true what himself affirms; *I and the Father are one.* John x. 30. Yet hath he not this essence of himself, but by communication; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself.* John v. 26. He is *The image of the invisible God,* (an image most perfectly like, because having the very same nature,) an effulgency of his glory, and a character (or perfect impression) of his substance; and this eternal communication of the same Divine essence is that generation, in respect of which he is most properly and truly the only begotten Son of God. If to produce a being like, (in any kind or degree,) be to generate; to impart a being without any dissimilitude or disparity at all, perfectly the same, is the most proper generation: and that none other (beside our Saviour) was so begotten, in any manner like or comparable to this, is evident enough; for that as no reason could have taught us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other was. By creation things receive a being from God infinitely different, unlike, and unequal to the being of God; and that filiation Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3.

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which is grounded upon adoption and grace is wholly diverse from this: and the communication of the Divine essence to the Holy Ghost doth so differ in manner from this, (though the manner be incomprehensible to us,) that it is never called generation in Scripture, and therefore we must not presume it to be so. But so much for explication of the point.

For application briefly: The consideration of this point will serve to instruct and confirm our faith concerning the mystery of our redemption; to direct and heighten our devotion; to raise in us a due gratitude toward God; to beget hope and comfort in us.

1 We may first hence learn whence the undertaking of Christ (his performances and his sufferings for us) become of so great worth and efficacy. It is no wonder that God's only Son's mediation should be so acceptable and effectual with God; that his blood should be so precious in God's sight, and his intercession so prevalent with him. What could God deny his own Son, *The Son of his love*, Υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, so earnestly entreating, in our behalf? What debts might not so rich a price discharge? What anger could not so dear a sacrifice appease? What justice should so full a compensation not satisfy? We were not redeemed with gold; all the Indies had not been able to ransom a soul; all the hecatombs in the world cannot satisfy for a peccadillo. Well might a person so infinitely worthy and excellent be a sufficient ransom for whole worlds of miserable offenders and captives; well might his voluntary suffering a bitter and disgraceful death countervail

1 John i. 7. Heb. ix. 14.

Col. i. 13.

1 Pet. i. 18.

Ps. xlix. 7.

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the deserved punishment of all mankind. If our displeasing and dishonouring a Person so great, so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Person submitting in our behalf to justice and performance of satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation, and countervail the injury done. Well therefore may we believe and say with the Apostle, *Who shall criminate against the elect of God? It is God that justifieth;* (the Son of God, as himself God, that satisfies justice for us:) *Who is there that condemns? It is Christ that hath died for us.* Rom. viii. 33, 34.

2 We learn what reverence and adoration is due to our Saviour; and why we must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father, (as himself hath taught us to do;) whence it is, that, in St John's Revelation, every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, did (and ought to) say, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever,* (ascribing the same pre-eminency, and paying the same veneration jointly to God Almighty, and to the Lamb his blessed Son;) why, not we men only, (whom he hath particularly purchased and redeemed,) but even all things in heaven and earth, and beneath the earth, must bend the knee (yield worship and observance) to him. When the *first-begotten is brought into the world,* it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him.* We are (we see) obliged to ascribe Divine glory, to yield Divine adoration to Christ: why? Because he is the only Son of God, equal in majesty, one in John v. 23. Rev. v. 13. Phil. ii. 9, 10. Heb. i. 6.

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essence with him. Were it not so, it were injury
Isai. xlii. 8. to God and sacrilege to do it: God would not impart his glory, we should not yield it to another.

3 We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God unto us, and our obligation to love, and
Rom. v. 8. answerable thankfulness toward him: *God commendeth his love toward us,* saith St Paul, *in that,*
1 John iv. 9, 10. *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: In this,* saith St John, *was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: In this is love,* (love indeed, admirable and inconceivable,) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins.* Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, of goodness, as for a Prince (himself perfectly glorious and happy) freely to deliver up his own only most dearly beloved Son, (out from his bosom of glory and bliss,) to suffer most base contumelies, most grievous torments, for the welfare of his declared enemies, traitors, and rebels? Such hath been God's goodness to us, suitable thereto should our gratitude be toward him.

4 This consideration fitly serves to beget in us hope in God upon all occasions of our need or dis-
John iii. 16. tress; as also comfort in all our afflictions: *He hath so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son* for its salvation and happiness; how can he be supposed unwilling to bestow whatever else shall appear needful or beneficial for us? He that parted with a jewel so inestimable in charity and pity toward us, to him no other thing can seem much to give us: it is St Paul's consolatory dis-

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course; *He that did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* all things that we need, that we can reasonably desire, that will be good and fit for us. Rom. viii. 32.

5 I might add the use which St John makes of this consideration; *Beloved,* saith he, *if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another:* if God so lovingly gave up his only Son for us; what, (in respect, in gratitude, in imitation of him;) what expressions, I say, of charity and good-will ought we to yield toward our brethren! what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should be too dear for us to impart for their good! So much for this point. It follows, 1 John iv. 11.

Our Lord.

As the name of God is by a mysterious kind of peculiarity attributed to the Father, so is the name of Lord to the Son; who is sometimes called absolutely the Lord, (or the Lord Jesus,) sometimes our Lord; to acknowledge and call him so being the special duty and character of a Christian: *There be* (saith St Paul; there be, according to popular or worldly use) *gods many, and lords many, but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ:* and, *One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all things;* (are by us Christians professed:) and, *No man can call Jesus Lord,* (that is, cordially embrace Christianity,) *but by the Holy Ghost.* The reason of which peculiar appellation may be, because, beside that natural dominion over us appertaining to Christ as our 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Eph. iv. 5, 6. 1 Cor. xii. 3. Phil. ii. 11.

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God and Maker, that title is in several other respects, and upon other grounds due to him. In what notion soever we take lord, as a governor over subjects, as a master over servants, as an owner of goods, as a master of disciples, as a leader of followers, he is, according to all such notions, our Lord. Consider him in whatever respect or capacity, as God, as man, as Θεάνθρωπος, (God and man united; as Jesus, as Christ,) he is our Lord. Examine all foundations imaginable of just dominion: eminence of nature, of power, derivation of being, with the preservation and maintenance thereof; donation, acquisition, desert, purchase, redemption, conquest, compact, and resignation of ourselves; upon them all his right of lordship over us is justly grounded.

As God he is our Lord: endued with supreme authority and irresistible power, he hath made all things, and upholds all things; and therefore all things are subject to his disposal, (to be governed, and possessed, and used according to his pleasure;) hence that most peculiar and august name of God, Jehovah, (denoting either independency and indefectibility in subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in action; both together; and therefore fitly rendered Κύριος by the Seventy interpreters[a], and Lord by our translators,) is attributed to him; *This is his name*, saith the Prophet, *whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness;* and what is in the New Testament spoken of Jehovah, is in the New Testament by infallible exposition applied to

Jer. xxiii. 6.

[a] For κύρειν doth signify *to subsist;* and κῦρος, *efficacy, ratification, power,* or *authority.*

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him: as, for instance, what Malachi did foretel concerning Elias, that he should prepare the way of Jehovah, was verified in St John Baptist's preparing the way to our Saviour. Mal. iii. 1. Matt. iii. 3. Luke i. 76.

As man also God did confer upon him lordship; a power and authority of ruling and judging; of remitting offences; and punishing and rewarding: *The Father hath given him authority even to execute judgment, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν, because* (or *whereas*) *he is the Son of man:* and, *Let all the house of Israel,* saith St Peter, *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ,* (even) *this Jesus, whom you did crucify:* and, *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and reward every man according to his works:* and, *Being found in shape as a man, he humbled himself,* saith St Paul, *becoming obedient unto death, the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him—that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord:* and again; *To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living:* and, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church: Thou hast given him power over all flesh.* Thus hath God in him performed more signally and eminently what the Psalmist thankfully acknowledges and praises him for in regard to man; *Thou crownest him with glory and* John v. 27. Acts ii. 36. Matt. xvi. 27. Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11. Vid. Matt. ix. 2, 6. Vid. Acts x. 42. Rom. xiv. 9. Eph. i. 20, 21, 22. John xvii. 2. Ps. viii. 5, 6.

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Heb. ii. 7, 8. *honour; and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.*

As God-man he is also Lord, and Lord of lords; whatever naturally did belong to God; whatever freely was conferred on man, (by way of gift or reward,) did accrue to the Person, and was consequent upon the union hypostatical; so that, in this respect, Christ is eternally Lord; *Lord,* indeed, *of all,* as St Peter styles him; *Having all things* (excepting God himself, as St Paul teaches us) *put under his feet;* but particularly (which most concerns us to acknowledge and consider) our Lord; and that upon several grounds, which it will be convenient briefly to touch. An entire power over us, and a perfect ability to govern us, he hath; in which respects it is both necessary to submit to him, and reasonable willingly to admit him as our Lord: (persons so qualified, Aristotle himself in his Politics tells us, have a natural title to dominion[b]; as on the contrary, persons weak, or unwise, unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things to their own good, are naturally subjects and servants.) Also, he hath made us, and he preserves us; all we are or have is wholly derived from and depends upon him; whence he hath an absolute right to dispose of and use us according to his discretion and pleasure. He is the Son of God, is heir apparent, and natural Lord of all things; and so our Lord, by birth and privilege of nature.

Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 27.

But further: he hath also acquired us to himself, (adding a legal to a natural right;) we are called περιποίησις, (an acquist made by him;) and

Eph. i. 14.

[b] [Lib. 1. cap. 2.]

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λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, (*a people appertaining to,* or *by, acquisition.*) Divers ways hath Christ acquired us: by donation from God; *Whom thou hast given me,* saith he to his Father, *I have kept:* and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.* So we fall under by conquest; conquest over his enemies; conquest over us ourselves, being his enemies; we were (partly by violence, partly by consent) enslaved to his enemies, and lived in obedience to them: them hath Christ quite vanquished and subdued, *Having spoiled* (ἀπεκδυσάμενος) *those principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them;*) and so we rightfully fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory, and formerly belonging to his enemies: yea, ourselves, being, as St Paul speaks, ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *Enemies in our mind* and discourse, (discovering our enmity by wicked, disobedient, and rebellious practices,) did he subdue by the power of his word and Spirit; whence, as it is in the Benedictus, *Being delivered out of the hand of our enemies,* (his enemies, and ours in truth and effect,) *we may,* we should *serve him without fear:* being *servati,* we become *servi;* being *subacti,* we are *subditi.* He might have justly destroyed us, deprived us of liberty and life, as dependents upon and partizans of his enemies; as ourselves being in actual hostility against him: but seeing he hath saved us, we thereby become his vassals. But, further, he hath purchased us: he hath delivered up himself a ransom and a price for us; and so hath acquired us, hath redeemed us, hath bought us with his own blood: we having forfeited our

1 Pet. ii. 9.

John xvii. 12; vi. 39; xvii. 6.

Eph. ii. 2, 3, &c.

Col. ii. 15.

Col. i. 21.

Luke i. 74.

Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. i. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23.

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lives to God's law, and being sentenced to a miserable death; he procured our redemption by himself undergoing equivalent punishment, discharging our debt, and satisfying the Divine justice for us:
1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. whence, as St Paul argues, *We are not our own; for we were bought with a price;* we are his, who saved our lives, freed us from captivity, drew us
2 Cor. v. 15. out of extreme and endless misery; ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες, *That we* (now) *living should not henceforth live to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again:* in requital for mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot (not in gratitude only, but in justice) owe less than ourselves; ourselves to be rendered wholly into his dominion and disposal. He hath also acquired lordship over us, by desert and as a reward agreeable to his performEph. i. 20. ances, of obedience and patience highly satisfactory
Phil. ii. 8, 9. and acceptable to God; *He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the cross: therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name:*
Rom. xiv. 9. *To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,*
Vid. John x. 17. ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ, *that he might exer-*
Ps. cx. 7. *cise lordship over both the dead and living: He drank of the brook in the way: therefore he hath lift*
Isai. liii. 12. *up his head: Therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death:*
Heb. ii. 9. and, *We see Jesus,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *for his sufferance of death, crowned with glory and honour.* I may add, that he hath acquired a right and title over us, as our continual benefactor, by the benefits he bestows, and the hire he pays us; he affords us sure protection, liberal maintenance, ample wages, (great privileges

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under rich rewards) for our service; *Knowing,* saith St Paul, *that ye shall* (in regard to your obedience) *receive* τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας, *the recompense of an inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.* It is no Egyptian bondage that he detains us under; requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompense; but a most beneficial and fruitful service. *Doth Job fear God for nought?* the Devil could not but observe and envy the benefits and blessings the pious man received in regard of his faithful service. Christ hath promised to withhold no good thing from his servants; nothing necessary for the support or comfort even of this temporal life; but especially most inestimably precious recompenses he will bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings: *He will render to every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:* and, *Being freed from sin, and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification; and in the end everlasting life:* a fruit to sanctification, (all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here,) and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness: to them who have been diligent and faithful in performing their tasks, and improving the talents committed to them for his interest, he will one day say, *Euge, bone serve, Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into thy Master's joy: Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake: rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great shall your reward be in heaven.* And he that is at such care and charges for us; who feeds

Col. iii. 24.

Job i. 9.

Vid. 1 Cor. iii. 8. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Matt. vi. 33.

Rom. ii. 6. Col. iii. 24.

Rom. vi. 22.

Matt. xxv. 21, &c. Rev. xi. 18. Matt. v. 11, 12.

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and furnishes us so plentifully; who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our improfitable services, with so high and bountiful wages; him sure most justly we should esteem, most willingly call, our good Lord and Master.

But yet further, he is not only our Lord by nature, by acquisition, by manifold deserts and performances of his; but by our deeds also, by most formal and solemn, most free and voluntary, and therefore most obligatory, acts of ours: he is our Lord and King by election: finding ourselves oppressed by our cruel enemies, (groaning under intolerable slaveries to sin and Satan,) we had recourse to him upon his gracious invitation, offering us ease and refreshment under his most gentle and equal government; *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: take my yoke upon you—for my yoke is easy, and my burden light.* So he invited us; and so we did (or did at least pretend to) undergo his yoke, and freely submit to his government; we vowed allegiance and fealty to him, as our lawful prince; promised subjection to his will, and obedience to his laws; engaged (forsaking all things) to follow him, and fight under his banners against the common enemies of his glory and our salvation: we contracted with him, upon certain conditions and considerations, (most advantageous to ourselves,) to be his obedient and faithful servants[b]; not only renouncing all other masters, but resigning up all pretence to liberty, or power over ourselves; becoming absolutely subject to his will and command: this we did at our Baptism in most

Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.

Matt. xx. 2.

[b] Συμφωνήσας μετὰ τῶν ἐργατῶν.—Matt. xx. 2.

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express and solemn manner: and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; by acknowledging his right over us, and our duty toward him; by imploring his princely protection, and succour, and mercy upon us; and by promising our humble respect and obedience toward him. Upon so many grounds is Jesus Christ the Son of God our Lord. The general influence of which doctrine upon our practice is very obvious and palpable.

1 If we do truly believe Christ our Lord, we must conceive ourselves obliged to observe and submit to his will; to attend unto and obey his law; *Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?* It is a vain and absurd profession (an irrational and illusive pretence) we make, when we confess and invoke him as our Lord, and disavow his authority in our practice: *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;* (shall obtain the reward assigned to a faithful servant; but he that really performs the duty of one; that does the will of God:) *Do ye not know,* saith St Paul, *that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?* We forfeit all pretence to the very name (as well as to the rewards and privileges) of Christ's servants, if we disobey his commands; being really servants to the lusts which sway us; to the Devil, whose suggestions and pleasure we comply with. We do but usurp the name of Christians, if our practice be not conformable to the laws of Christ.

Luke vi. 46.

Matt. vii. 21.

Rom. vi. 16.

2 If Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, not our own men; and therefore must

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not think to have our own will and do our own business; please our own appetites, or gratify our desires; except in subordination and reference to his service; *We are not our own,* saith St Paul; *for we are bought with a price*: (we are by nature, by manifold acquisition, by free choice and compact his:) *For this end Christ died,* (and performed all for us,) *that they which live, may not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died and rose again for them: Whether we live or whether we die,* (whatever actions we undertake, relating either to life or death,) *we are the Lord's,* and should direct all to his glory, his profit, his service.

1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

2 Cor. v. 15.

Rom. xiv. 8.

Vid. John xiii. 13.

3 If Christ be our Lord, (absolutely our Lord,) then can we have no other lords; none in opposition to, none in competition with him; none but in subserviency and respect to him; *No man,* our Saviour tells us, *can serve two lords* (with collateral and equal observance). Serving riches, or honours, or pleasures, is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; *He that doth not forsake all that he hath, cannot be his disciple,* or servant. Nor can we therefore please and humour men; obeying any command, or complying with any desire, or following any custom of theirs, contrary to Christ's will and precept: *If I did yet please* (or *soothe*) *men,* saith St Paul, *I were not the servant of Christ: Ye are bought with a price; be not ye* (or you are not) *the servants of men;* that is, do not (or ye ought not to) perform service with ultimate relation to men, but out of conscience to Christ, as his servants. We may, we are bound to obey men humbly, and willingly, and diligently, and faith-

Matt. vi. 24.

Luke xiv. 33.

Gal. i. 10.

1 Cor. vii. 23.

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fully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as subjects or servants; but this in subordination to our supreme and principal Lord; *Servants,* saith St Paul, *obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling,* (that is, humbly and respectfully,) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to men: Yea, whatsoever,* saith the same wise instructor, *ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompense of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.* Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7. Vid. 1 Pet. ii. 16. Col. iii. 23, 24.

4 It is, we see, (which may be another use of this point,) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty, particularly to those hard duties of cheerful obedience and submission to men, (who are sometimes, as St Peter intimates to us, σκολιοί, somewhat untoward and harsh in their dealings with their servants,) that therein do we serve a most equal and gentle Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it; a Lord, that will not suffer his servants to want any needful sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but raise them to the highest preferment imaginable. It is a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean soever he be in this world) to consider this relation of his; how great, how good a Master he doth serve; that the greatest princes, that the highest angels, are his fellow-servants; yet that his gracious Lord 1 Pet. ii. 18.

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will not despise or neglect him. St Paul also makes use of this consideration to press upon superiors their duties towards their inferiors; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity; *Masters,* saith he, *yield unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven: And, ye masters, do the same things to them,* (to your servants,) *forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; and there is no respect of persons with him; Thou hast not despised the lowliness of thy handmaid.* And we see how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those faithful and wise servants, who being appointed over his household, (placed in any superior rank and office,) do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, dispensing them their food in due season; so those which beat and abuse their fellow-servants; that are rigorous and unmerciful in their exactions of debt, or other dealing toward their fellow-servants, he denounces severe punishment and vengeance upon.

Col. iv. 1.
Eph. vi. 9.
Ps. cxxxv. 14.
Luke i. 48.
Matt. xxiv. 45.
Matt. xviii. 28, &c.

The further consideration of this point our Saviour improves as an engagement to imitate him; especially in charity, in humility, in patience: it is proper for a servant to follow, to attend upon in all places and performances, to compose himself to the example, to conform to the garb and condition of his master. Were it not absurd, that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master; that he should despise those whom his master vouchsafes to regard, that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should disdain to undergo those hardships, his

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master doth condescend to? To such purpose our Saviour discourses; *Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining, *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord.* He ought in reason to be very well content, if he find such usage as his lord hath willingly and patiently undergone.

John xiii. 13, 14, 15.

Matt. x. 24, 25. Luke vi. 40. John xv. 20.

Full of many such practical uses is this excellent doctrine; the which I leave to be deduced by your private meditation.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

The proper name, special title, principal relations of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord, (the peculiar grand object of our Christian faith, wherein was included or implied what did especially respect his Divinity, so far as it is revealed unto or may be comprehended by us,) being hitherto expressed, and in some manner explained and applied by us, we proceed to that which follows: those illustrious accidents, or passages and circumstances, chiefly agreeing to his humanity, what he undertook and underwent, performed and enjoyed, in our nature and in our behalf,

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being here orderly set down; partly for the full and clear description or determination of his person; partly upon design to insinuate those principal doctrines, (depending upon or involved in those passages,) wherein the mystery of our Religion doth consist; which we are chiefly obliged to believe, and which have great influence upon our practice. In the first place, as good order did require, is delivered the manner of his nativity, (that is, of his incarnation, or assuming human nature,) which in the ancient Creeds (as we see in the texts of ancient expositors) was expressed more simply thus; *Qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine; Who was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.* The alteration seems to have been made more distinctly to express the operation of the Holy Ghost in the generation of our Saviour, and what the blessed Virgin his mother did confer thereto. We know in ordinary procreation the influence of the father does not extend beyond the quickening of the mother's womb, whatever that influence be; (for it is a deep and inscrutable mystery of nature, exceeding perhaps the reach of all human philosophy, whether it contain an imparting of somewhat material, or be only the inserting an active vital principle;) the effect of which influence is called conception; the word agreeing in some propriety both to the mother, which is said to conceive, and to the child, which is conceived: the further perfecting the work of generation (by forming the *fœtus* from its initial rudiments into a due integrity and fit disposition of parts; nourishing, increasing, and excluding thereof) no further immediately

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depending upon the father, but being carried on by the concurrence of what was first imparted by him, and what is thenceforth communicated by the mother. In regard to which performances, the mother is said τίκτειν; that is, both *gignere* and *parere; to conceive, bear,* and *to bring forth:* (for τίκτειν doth import as much as γεννᾶν, all that a parent doth confer to generation; whence both parents are called τοκεῖς; and τέκνον, a child, is used indifferently as relating to both.) Now to express that influence or efficacy the Divine Spirit had in the generation of our Saviour as man, by which God himself did in a manner supply the place of a father, it was set down, *Conceived by the Holy Ghost;* and when it is said, *Born of the Virgin Mary,* what the blessed Virgin, as mother, did confer thereto, is to be understood: and the occasion perhaps of thus expressing the thing was that saying of the Angel to the Virgin, *Behold,* Luke i. 31. *thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth* Matt. i. 20. (συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ, καὶ τέξῃ) *a son, and shalt call his name Jesus*[a]. But whatever was the reason or occasion of this expression, it is evident that the proposition and assertion of these truths was intended:

I. That our Saviour was conceived and born.

II. That his conception was effected without any influence of man, only by the power of God and operation of the Holy Ghost.

III. That the blessed Virgin Mary did, by the Holy Ghost, conceive, and bear, and bring him forth. Let us reflect and observe somewhat upon each of these propositions.

[a] Τὸ γεννηθὲν is translated *conceived.*—Matt. i. 20.

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I. Our Saviour was conceived and born: he, (the Person before mentioned,) Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord; the same who was in the beginning, and did from all eternity exist with God, the eternal Son of God, by whom all things were made, was in the fulness of time conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, and became thereby truly and entirely man; which wonderful mystery is in Scripture variously expressed or implied by, the Word's being made, or becoming, flesh; God being manifested in the flesh; taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as man; assuming the seed of Abraham; partaking of flesh and blood; descending from heaven; God sending his Son into the world, in likeness of sinful flesh; coming in the flesh. The result of what is signified by these and the like expressions being this; that he which before from all eternity did subsist in the form or nature of God, being the Son of God, did by a temporal generation truly become man; assuming human nature into the unity of his person, by a conjunction and union thereof with the Divine nature incomprehensible and ineffable: he truly became man, I say, like unto us in all things, sin only excepted; consisting of body and soul, endued with all faculties, and subject to all passions, infirmities, necessities consequent upon or incident to our nature. He did not only seem in shape and outward appearance, (as a spectre, deluding men's sight and fancy,) but was in perfect truth a man; having a real body; circumscribed and figured like ours, compacted of flesh and blood; that might be seen and felt; that

John i. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 7, 8. Heb. ii. 16, 14. Rom. viii. 3. John xiii. 13, 31; vi. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58; iii. 17; x. 36; xvii. 18. 1 John iv. 9; iv. 2, 3. Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15.

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was nourished and grew; that needed and received sustenance; that was frail and tender; passible and sensible; was bruised with blows; torn with scourges; pricked with thorns; pierced with nails; transfixed with an injurious spear. He had a soul too, endued with suitable faculties; an understanding capable of improvement; (for he grew in wisdom, in stature;) a will subject and submissive to the divine will; *Let this cup pass from me, if it be thy will: but, however, not my will, but thine be done:* and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me;* appetites of meat, drink, sleep, and rest: several passions and affections, φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη, *Natural, irreprehensible passions;* and those of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, anger, grief, and pity; and these sometimes expressed by most pathetical significations, in groans and tears. Upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death, it is said, *He groaned in spirit, and was troubled,* and *wept:* and ye know what heaviness, agonies, excesses of sorrow, disturbances, and amazements, (they are terms used by the Evangelists,) he underwent before his passion: so that, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, *We have not an high-priest that could not so compassionate* συμπαθῆσαι (or *sympathise with*) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or proved and exercised) *as we are; yet without sin.*

Luke xxii. 64. Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 26. John xix. 1. Luke ii. 52. Luke xxii. 42. John v. 30. Mark iii. 5. John xi. 33, 35; xii. 27. Luke xxii. 44. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Mark xiv. 33. Heb. iv. 15. Luke xxii. 28.

Thus did the Son of God (coeternal and coessential to his Father) become the Son of man, (truly and entirely of the nature and substance of man;) deficient in no essential part; devoid of no human property; exempt from no imperfection or

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inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin.

If you demand the manner how, and the reason why, God thus became man; as to the first (the manner[b]) we must answer, that we can hardly otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it: no words perhaps we use, to signify our conceptions about these lower things, can perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so far different from common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; yet we must affirm, that whatever manner of conceiving or expressing it doth derogate from the divine perfections, or is repugnant to the nature of things, disagrees from the tenor of divine truths, (connected unto or depending upon this mystery,) or contradicts (directly, or obliquely, immediately or by plain consequence) the language and doctrines of the Scriptures, is to be rejected by us: we may therefore say with the Council of Chalcedon[c], that in this incarnation of our Lord the divine and human nature were in his person united, ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.

Ἀσυγχύτως, without commixtion or confusion, (for that would induce a third nature different from both,) such as results from the composition or contemperation of the elements into a mixed body; so that he should be neither God nor man: but I know not what other kind of being, without any

[b] Cujusmodi sit hæc communicatio, qua natura humana communicatur Verbo, non est hominis definire. *Alens.* [Verbatim. Cujusmodi autem sit illa communicatio; non est hominis definire.—Alens. Summa Theol. Pars III. Quæst. II. Memb. 4.]

[c] [Act. V. Bin. Conc. Tom. III. p. 340.]

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ground or authority to be supposed, that would destroy, diminish, or alter the properties belonging to each; neither can we conceive the Divine nature capable of any such diminution or alteration.

Ἀτρέπτως, without conversion, or transmutation of one nature into the other: not of the Divinity into humanity: for how could God, as God, be changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die? Not of the humanity into Divinity: for how could that, before it did exist at all, be turned into another thing? why should our Saviour be called man, when his humanity was transmuted into the Divinity? why is it said, *The Word was made flesh,* if the flesh was changed into the Word? To omit how unimaginable it is, that one substance should be turned into another, especially that a finite substance should be turned into an infinite one; also to omit many dangerous consequences of this opinion, and its inconsistency with many great and plain doctrines of our Religion.

John i. 14.

Ἀδιαιρέτως, undividedly: so that the two natures have not distinct subsistences, nor do constitute two persons; for there is but one Christ, one Person, to whom being God and man are truly and properly attributed.

Ἀχωρίστως, inseparably; the natures being never separated; the union never dissolved; the same Person never ceasing to be both God and man; no, not when, as man, he suffered and died: for he raised himself from the dead; he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as continuing God, he was able to raise himself as man: as being man, he was capable of being raised by himself as God;

John ii. 19.

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the union between God and man persisting, when the union between the human body and soul were dissolved.

I might add further, exclusively; that this union of the two natures was not made *κατὰ παράστασιν*, by assistance or close presence only; nor *κατ' ἐνοίκησιν*, by way of inhabitation; nor *κατὰ σχέσιν*, by relation; *κατ' ἀξίαν*, by dignity or esteem; *κατὰ ταὐτοβουλίαν*, or *καθ' ἁρμονίαν*, by consent, or conformity of will and counsel; as Nestorius and such ancient heterodox dogmatists, in opposition to the Catholic expositions of this mystery, did conceit: but it is scarce worth mentioning those antiquated opinions: I cannot longer dwell here: I shall only subjoin, (omitting others more wide and improper[d]; as those of Bellarmine[e], the union of a man's arm to his body; the incision of a bough into a tree, and such like,) that nature doth afford us one comparison fit to explain or illustrate the manner of this mysterious union; which is the union of man's soul and body, by which he becomes one person. The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, properties, and dignity, (the one material, extended, divisible, corruptible, passive, lifeless, and senseless; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion,) capable also both of separate existence and subsistence by themselves; yet are these (though in a manner difficult for us to imagine or comprehend) united together, and concur to the constitution of a man, (and that so as to remain

[d] Vid. Salmeron. apud Gerard. Loc. Exeg. p. 441.

[e] [De Christo, Lib. III. cap. 8. §§ 6, 11, 12, 13.]

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still in substance distinct, retaining each its natural properties, without any confusion, or conversion of one into the other; so also that a man is truly from them denominated both corporeal and spiritual, mortal and immortal:) in like manner, though more admirably and incomprehensibly, are the divine and human nature united in the Son of God: *For,* (as we read in Athanasius's Creed,) *as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.*

So much for the manner how: as for the reason why the Son of God did thus condescend to assume our nature, if we inquire the impulsive cause that moved him thereto, it was only God's infinite goodness, mercy, and pity towards us; *So God loved the world, that he* thus *sent his only begotten Son:* it was the χρηστότης and φιλανθρωπία, the beneficence and philanthropy, (if I may so speak,) of God, that induced him by such a debasement, as it were, and an exinanition of himself, to save us. If we desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why God, among other means and methods, (alike perhaps, for all we can know, possible to him,) did choose by this to procure our redemption and salvation; I answer, (though it becomes us rather to adore the depth of his counsels, than to search or hope to sound it, yet,) some congruities of this method to the wisdom of God, and the reason of the thing, are intimated to us, and in some manner are apparent.

John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9. Tit. iii. 4. Phil. ii. 7.

It became God, as his goodness towards us was infinite, so that the demonstrations thereof to his glory and our good should be answerably so, which

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perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension; as a prince could not make any other so great attestation of his favour to his vassal, than by descending from his throne, laying aside his majesty, and putting himself in a like condition, conversing with him freely, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniences with him.

It was expedient our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us; to remove such great obstacles, to subdue so potent enemies, (to command and contravene nature; to vanquish hell; to abolish death in our behalf,) that by the nearness of his relation, the dignity of his person, and the value of his merit, he might fully appease God's wrath, and perfectly satisfy his justice for us: that his doctrine might carry with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy; his example might challenge greatest regard and imitation; his laws might have supreme authority, and perfectly oblige: the redemption and salvation of man was an honour too high for any creature to arise to; a work too hard for any but God himself to perform: it was not fit that any creature should intercede or intermeddle in an affair of such importance and eminency.

It was also requisite he should be man, that he might procure favour toward man, by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will, as man; that as man had deeply offended and wronged God, so man should highly please and content him; that, in St Paul's language, *As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,* (condemned and exposed to death;

Rom. v. 19, &c.

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God being displeased with mankind for that man's transgression,) *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous,* (absolved from guilt, and exempted from punishment; God being well-pleased with, and reconciled to mankind, in regard to that man's dutiful observance:) it was decent, that as man did approve, so man should condemn sin in the flesh; as man by wilful self-pleasing was brought to misery, so by voluntary suffering he should be restored to happiness; ἔπρεπε, *It became him,* saith the Apostle, *for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering:* it was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, and propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve us in our distresses, should be tender of our good and sensible of our needs; (should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθεῖν, to compassionate our infirmities, and μετριοπαθεῖν, to be gently affected toward us, in respect of our ignorances and errors;) *Whence,* saith the same divine Apostle, *it behoved him* (ὤφειλε, he ought, according to the design appointed and undertaken by him) *to be in all things made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest toward God, in things pertaining to God, that he might propitiate for the sins of the people: for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is able to succour those that are tempted.* I might add, that, by appearing in human shape, (visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us,) he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intention toward us, in a less amazing and

Rom. viii. 3.

Heb. ii. 10.

Heb. iv. 15; v. 2.

Heb. ii. 17, 18.

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a more obliging way, than could otherwise have been; that thus with more advantage he could describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to follow; shewing us how we should as men behave ourselves, how moderate our appetites, how govern our passions; how use and order all the powers of our soul and members of our body: neither was it possible otherwise that so lively a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, patience, and humility could have been exhibited.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was intended to recapitulate and reconcile (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι*, and *ἀποκαταλλάξαι*,) all things in heaven and earth; should be the great mediator and peacemaker between God and man; should repair God's honour, and dispense his grace; purchase man's peace, and procure his salvation; that he should be the most nearly related to both parties; even, if possible, (and what is to God impossible?) be himself both God and man; the Son of God, and our brother; the same in nature with God, in kind with us.

Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20.

The proper use and influence of which great doctrine upon our souls should be, to cause us with highest degrees of love and thankfulness to adore the infinite goodness of that God who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might raise us up from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness to the highest pitch of honour and happiness we are capable of. What words can express, what thought can reach, a favour so ineffable and inconceivable! Well might St Paul call it *ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην*, *Love transcending all knowledge.* Well may heaven

Eph. iii. 19. Vid. Luke i. 78.

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and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at such a miracle of mercy. The sovereign Majesty of heaven, the Lord of glory, the world's Maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, to become a poor, small, weak, and frail man; to dwell in a tabernacle of flesh; to converse with vile, silly, wretched mortals; to be subject to want, reproach, and pain! Ὦ βαθός! O depth of love and goodness unsearchable! If this will not, what consideration can raise us? what benefit affect or oblige us? What prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be insensible or neglectful of such kindness! John i. 14.

Another great use of this doctrine is, to engage us, as to universal obedience and submission to God's will, so particularly to humility and patience and charity. Did God thus submit, thus abase himself; and shall we be refractory, shall we exalt ourselves, shall we repine at any dispensation or proceeding of God? To these purposes St Paul applies it; *Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in the fashion of man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death:* and, *Know* (or *consider*) *the grace* (or *graciousness*) *of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake* (ἐπτώχευσε) *he became poor,* (a beggar,) *being himself rich, that ye by his poverty might become rich.* It is a consideration by which he incites them to charity. Thus and to such purpose are we to believe our Saviour's conception and nativity. Of which, Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

II. Secondly, it is affirmed, and we are to consider, that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost;

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that is, by the virtue and operation of the Holy Ghost the blessed Virgin became impregnated, and did conceive him, without intervention of any man or father. Joseph was (ὡς ἐνομίζετο) in outward esteem and carriage, but God only was in truth, his father; which is so perspicuously and fully asserted in the Gospels, that those who dare (upon weak pretences of discourse) to contradict it[f], deserve not to be considered otherwise than as perverters of the Scripture, and subverters of its authority and use: nothing can be certainly known thence, if this truth be not.

Lukē iii. 23.

The manner of this operation, as by St Luke expressed, is by the supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the Divine power's overshading the blessed Virgin; words of so general signification, and so little, as to their full extent, intelligible by us, that they well serve to bound our curiosity, and forbid further inquiry. Some[g], indeed, have been so bold, as to determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from heaven and instil a body into the Virgin; that our Saviour's flesh was made of a Divine seed, and of the substance of God; that the Holy Ghost did in his conception create and impart somewhat of matter. It is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits. The Fathers more soberly (to prevent dangerous and unbecoming thoughts and speeches in this matter) say, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Ghost, not σπερματικῶς, (*seminally,*) but δημιουρ-

Luke i. 35.

[f] Vid. Episcopium de Josephitis.—[Inst. Theol. Lib. IV. cap. 10. Opp. Theol. Tom. I. p. 421.]

[g] Valentinus and his sect of old. Menno, Servetus, &c. Smalcius, &c. Socinus, his followers.

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γικῶς, (*operatively;*) οὐ διὰ συνουσίας, ἀλλὰ διὰ δυνάμεως, *not by copulation, but by power*[h]; *Non de substantia Spiritus Sancti, sed de potentia*[i]; *Not out of the substance, but by the virtue of the Holy Ghost.* Further than so, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit?* Who can declare the τὸ πῶς, the perfect manner of a generation so sublime and wonderful? The reasons of his being thus conceived are more obvious.

* * * * * *

In my endeavour to shew the reasons why our Saviour was thus conceived, I was interrupted the last time: I shall therefore, resuming a little what was said, proceed.

1 It was the most fit way of effecting that so necessary conjunction of the Divine and human nature. A work of such glory and grandeur, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent than him who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works managed and attributed to him. In the creation of the world he moved upon the waters, forming and actuating the world; to him those signal works of providence, revelation of Divine truth, prediction of future events, performance of miracles, renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, are in a particular manner ascribed; and so to him this most high and glorious performance was proper and due.

2 It being necessary, that our Saviour should

[h] S. Joan. Damas. De Fide. Orthod. III. 2. [Opp. Tom. I. p. 205 A.] Just. Mart. [Apol. I. Opp. p. 65 D.]

[i] Aug. de Temp. Serm. VI. [Serm. CCXXXIV. Tom. V. (App.) col. 385 G.]

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be consecrated to his great offices, and perfectly sanctified in his person; and those performances being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, (the natural spring and author of all derived sanctity,) his efficacy therefore must needs intervene. If
Jer. i. 5. Gal. i. 15. Luke i. 15. Jeremiah, St Paul, St John Baptist, (persons designed to offices and employments in dignity and importance so far inferior,) were sanctified, and separated, and filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb; in how more excellent a kind and degree was it requisite, that he should be sanctified, who was sent to redeem and purify the world from all filth and fault? It was necessary, that his human nature, which God vouchsafed so highly to advance, (to assume into so near a conjunction and union with himself,) should be free from all stain and pollution, (such as adheres to our sinful flesh and corrupt nature in ordinary
Rom. viii. 3. propagation;) that he whom God should so dearly love, and be so entirely pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or im-
Ps. v. 4. purity; *For God,* as the Psalmist tells us, *is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall*
Hab. i. 13. *evil dwell with him: He is of purer eyes than* (so much as) *to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity,* much less would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, so dear a respect and complacence with himself. It was also necessary, that he who was appointed to appease God's displeasure, and reconcile him fully toward us; to redeem mankind from the guilt and power of sin; to satisfy and expiate for all our offences, with full authority to teach, command, and exemplify all
2 Cor. v. 21. righteousness; should himself know no sin; *Such*

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an high-priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners—who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins. The sacrifice expiatory of our sins was and ought to be *A Lamb* (ἄμωμος καὶ ἄσπιλος) *without blemish and without spot:* therefore was he fully sanctified, and became τὸ ἅγιον, *That holy thing,* as he is called by the Angel; (*Therefore that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God;*) therefore from the fountain of holiness, the Holy Ghost, (whose proper name doth import holiness, whose proper work it is to sanctify,) did he derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

Heb. vii. 26, 27.

1 Pet. i. 19.

Luke i. 35.

3 I might add, as observable, the analogy (or resemblance) that is between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his formation in us; his generation and our regeneration; his becoming our brother in the flesh, our becoming his brethren in the Spirit; both being performed by the same agent: as Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, and (θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως) *Partakers of the Divine nature* by the operation of the same Divine Spirit: as he by nature, so we by grace are born *Not by blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Hence accrues a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like us, but as we become like him, and are begot of God by the same heavenly virtue, by the same incorruptible seed.

Gal. iv. 19.

2 Pet. i. 4.

John i. 13.

1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John iii. 9.

The proper use of this doctrine is to cause us further still to adore the goodness and wisdom of God, so fully, so fitly carrying on that infinitely merciful and gracious work of our redemption; all

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the Divine Persons in a particular manner conspiring, as in the design, so in the execution thereof: the Father sending his Son; the Son condescending to come; the Holy Ghost bringing him into the world: to which blessed Trinity therefore rendering all praise and thanks, we proceed to that which is further contained in these words.

III. *Born of the Virgin Mary.*

Born of her. Being born doth not barely denote his nativity, but includes his whole human generation, (with the parts and progress thereof;) implying all that she, as a mother, did confer thereto; and comprehending, 1 His conception of her substance; whence he is called *The fruit of her womb; Rod* (or *branch*) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse;* and, *Behold,* saith the Angel, συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρί, *thou shalt conceive in thy womb.* 2 The nutrition, augmentation, and entire conformation of his body, also of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him, (*Blessed is the womb that bare thee;*) that she was ἔγκυος, (*gravidated,* or) *great with child* of him; and εὑρέθη, *She was found* (she was observed by apparent signs) ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα, *to be of child* with him. 3 His nativity itself; thus expressed by the Evangelist; *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered; and she brought forth her firstborn Son.* Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child is attributed plainly to the Virgin; whence she is truly and properly (and is accordingly frequently called in the Gospels) the mother of our Saviour, the mother of our Lord; and hath been (may be in some propriety of speech) styled Θεοτόκος, *Dei-*

Luke i. 42. Isai. xi. 1. Luke i. 31; xi. 27; ii. 5. Matt. i. 18. Luke ii. 6, 7. Luke i. 43.

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para; Dei genitrix et Dei mater: the bearer and mother of God, (that is, of him who is God, though not of him, as God.)

But let us further observe what the words afford to us considerable: *Born of the Virgin Mary:* they imply our Saviour born of a woman, born of a virgin, born of Mary. Of a woman, that was necessary or requisite to be; of a virgin, that was convenient, decent, and wonderful; of Mary, that determines the person, and involves many circumstances of importance.

1 I say, born of a woman, ἐκ σοῦ, (as it is in the best copies of St Luke, chap. i. 35) and ἐκ γυναικός, (as it is in St Paul, Gal. iv. 4) not in a woman only, (ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν, Matt. i. 20) or through a woman, but of a woman; that is, of the matter and substance of a woman; so as thereby to bear the relation of a kinsman, to become consanguineous to all mankind, (whom God did make of one blood.) We may easily conceive, that God could have immediately created (as he did our first parents) a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served his design of reconciling himself to us and redeeming us; to the effecting that, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity of blood was requisite, or at least more convenient and suitable. Our blood being tainted, our whole stock degraded by the disloyalty and rebellion of our common ancestors, it was fit it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit and fidelity of one who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted and received into God's family, it was fit it should be by inter-

Acts xvii. 26.

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vention of a common relation: such is St Paul's
Gal. iv. 4, 5. discourse; *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law;* that by performing the obedience due to the law, he might redeem those, who being obliged to obey the law, did yet transgress it; ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν; that we might be constituted sons; receive the state and quality of sons to God. It was congruous, that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, (had overthrown and triumphed over God's creature,) should, in just revenge, and for reparation of God's honour, by the strength and constancy of one proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased, accord-
Gen. iii. 15. ing to the prophetical promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head:* of the woman; the man is not mentioned; for (that which is next to be considered) he was

2 Born of a virgin. So it was of old presignified
Isai. vii. 14. and prophesied; *A Virgin shall conceive, and bear a*
Matt. i. 23. Luke i. 34. *son:* a Virgin; *alma,* ἀπόκρυφος, (so Aquila renders it,) a recluse; that perhaps seldom had seen, had never however known a man. So it was, and so it was fit it should be. It was decent, that the tabernacle in which God himself would dwell should be wholly proper and enclosed; that the temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil whence holiness itself would germinate should be clear and free from all sordid mixtures; that none
Exod. xix. 12, &c. should touch the border of that mountain where God would manifest himself, nor the lust of man approach that place whence the glory of God should so illustriously shine forth. It was also more than

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convenient, to excite admiration, to beget faith, to procure reverence in us, that our Saviour should be born in a manner so peculiar and miraculous; it could not otherwise appear plainly, that he was the Son of God. Who that hears of such a passage can forbear to wonder and consider? Who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learns to have been conceived without any concurrence of man? Who can do otherwise than adore him, that was born in a manner so glorious and supernatural? This, it seems, was that new thing (so strange and admirable) which, in the prophet Jeremiah, God did foreshew he would create in the earth, (then when he would restore Zion, and make a new covenant with Israel,) *A woman shall compass a man;* that Jer. xxxi. is, a woman (in a manner extraordinary, without 22. man's concourse) shall conceive and contain a man; a man, who shall accomplish those great things there prophesied of and promised. But further;

3 Born of Mary; of that particular person determined and described in the Gospel; her that was espoused to and lived with Joseph; (Joseph the carpenter, that was born in the town of Bethlehem; lived in Nazareth; was descended in a Luke ii. 4. direct lineage from king David, according to both a natural and legal descent, and consequently from Abraham; she being also of the same stock and family, as may be collected from some circumstances intimated in the story, but more certainly deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, and the assertions implying their accomplishment;) Mary, I say, a princess by blood and progeny; and extracted from the most

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illustrious stem upon earth, not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) most dear to God; yet very mean and poor in condition; humble and meek in spirit; religious and devout toward God: such the passages occurring in the Gospel concerning her do shew her; such that most excellent hymn of hers in St Luke (dictated by a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; devotion full of ardent love, passionate thankfulness, hearty joy tempered with submiss reverence) do demonstrate her to have been. Of a mother so related and so qualified was our Saviour born. So related; that was necessary, for the declaration of God's truth and fidelity, performing those ancient predictions and promises made to the fathers; to Abraham, (that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;) to David, to whom *God had sworn*, as St Peter tells us, *that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ, to sit upon his throne;* who (as appears by many passages in the Gospels) God's people did expect and believe that he should be the *Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots;* in whom the horn of David should bud; who should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen; and rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever. So was the blessed Virgin related, and to such purpose, (that all God's predictions and promises concerning the circumstances of our Saviour's birth might be verified,) and so qualified; such in outward condition; holy in disposition of mind; homely in state of life; to teach us, that God doth not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this

Gen. xxvi. 4; xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 11, 18. Gal. iii. 8. Acts iii. 15. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Acts ii. 30. Vid. Matt. xxii. 42; xx. 30; ii. 5; xxi. 15; xxiii. 9; xv. 22, 27. Rom. i. 3. Isai. xi. 1, 10. Rom. xv. 12. Rev. xxii. 16; v. 5. Amos ix. 11. Acts xv. 16. Luke i. 32, 33.

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world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit. It is some disparagement to those vain glories, by men so greatly admired; and it may induce us but moderately to esteem them, to consider, that God did not choose for the mother of his Son and Saviour of mankind any great princess, any honourable or wealthy personage; but her that was espoused to a mean artisan, rich only in grace, splendid in spiritual endowments; *Adorned with that hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibility of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* Such an one the Son of God chose to bear himself, to bear duty unto; to confer that great favour, that high honour upon; (an honour, among exterior ones, the highest that ever was vouchsafed to any person, to any mere creature: for spiritual blessings our Saviour himself doth prefer even above this great privilege; *Whosoever,* saith he, *shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother:* the same is so, according to a more excellent kind of relation.) By the way we may observe, that although the blessed Virgin was in that respect κεχαριτωμένη, especially favoured and blessed among women; though all nations must needs therefore esteem and call her blessed, though she justly acknowledged, that God had done μεγαλεῖα, (mighty and magnificent things for her,) yet in reality to have Christ born in our souls, to partake of his divine grace and presence in our hearts, is a higher honour, a truer happiness than that[k]:

1 Pet. iii. 4.

Matt. xii. 50.

Luke i. 28, 48, 49.

[k] Οὐδὲ τὸ κυοφορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν, καὶ τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον τόκον τεκεῖν, ἔχει τι κέρδος.—[Chrys. in Matt. Hom. XLIV. Opp. Tom. II. p. 287.]

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for when the good woman, ravished by our Saviour's discourse, did cry out, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee: Yea rather,* said he, *blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

Luke xi. 27, 28.

We must not also neglect to observe, that our Saviour chose so mean a parentage, partly that he might taste and undergo the hardships and inconveniences incident to our nature, (thereby more fully meriting and satisfying for us;) partly to give us example of the most difficult virtues and duties, (of humility, meekness, and patience,) shewing us how we should cheerfully endure wants, pains, disgraces; contentedly want all the pleasure, wealth, and splendour of the world.

The use of this point concerning our Saviour's birth of the blessed Virgin is not to beget in us fond opinions, or to ground scandalous practices in respect to her; attributing to her (I cannot say less than sacrilegiously and profanely) such swelling, vain, false titles and elogies, *Regina Cœli, Salus Mundi, Mater Miscricordiarum, Domina nostra, Sponsa Dei,* and the like; ascribing to her the most sublime attributes and actions of God, providence and protection over us, yea redemption itself; performing acts of religious veneration, (and those in a very high manner and strain,) and all this without any good reason, any plausible authority, or considerable example; I say, from such groundless conceits and dangerous practices we should beware; which, as they derogate from God's honour and prejudice his service, so they do rather injure, abuse, and discredit the blessed Virgin, than do any right or honour to her; whose greater honour, indeed, it was to be a meek and

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humble servant, than to be the mother of our Saviour and Lord; the greatest and truest honour we can do her is to imitate her grace, and to obey him who vouchsafed to be her son. But I will not prosecute that matter, nor further insist upon this point: some practical uses thereof I have in the precedent discourse insinuated; the rest I leave to your meditation.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified.

Next our Saviour's incarnation, (his conception and nativity,) with the causes and manner thereof, (partly expressed, partly implied,) doth succeed his passion. It might be inquired, why something concerning his life interceding is not mentioned, since we see the Apostles, in their preachings declaratory concerning the principal matters of our faith, take especial notice of those things; *Ye know,* saith St Peter, in his catechetical discourse to Cornelius and his friends, *the thing that was done throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; Jesus of Nazareth; how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him:* and the same Apostle in his speech to the Jews; *Ye men of Israel,* saith he, *hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye also know: him, being delivered, &c.* Why therefore is not some such mention made here concerning the manner of our Saviour's life, the quality of his works and actions?

Acts x. 37, 38.

Acts ii. 22.

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I answer; that it did suffice to describe our Saviour (as the object of the faith we profess) by such characters as did most notoriously determine and distinguish his person; and withal did involve and intimate the most signal mysteries of our faith, the most important doctrines of our Religion, the main design of his undertaking, the fit method in which he prosecuted it, and the most effectual means by which he accomplished it: the belief of which doth virtually contain (or consequentially infer) our belief of whatever beside it is necessary or expedient for us to believe concerning him. There was nothing about our Saviour's person more conspicuous and visible than his trial, condemnation, and execution, in the time, under the presidency, of Pontius Pilate; nor was any passage of his life, any performance of his more conducible to the accomplishment of that design, which God was pleased he should undertake: it was therefore sufficient and fit to describe him by this and other such passages, (well attested, important, and influential:) and if we believe in him who so suffered, we consequently believe all that he did or said; all that is in the Gospels (the most certain and authentical testimonies) delivered concerning him; and that he truly was whatever we see there he did pretend and teach himself to be; the true Messias, the only Son of God, and Saviour of the world. By this passage therefore (assuming his resurrection) the Apostles do characterise him: for instance; *Be it known to you all,* saith St Peter, *that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you have crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, in that doth this man stand before you*

Acts iv. 10.

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whole: neither to us only is the Lamb slain: a Rev. xiii. 8.
periphrasis fully and clearly denoting his person; but the Jews themselves, though out of hatred and in contempt, call him ordinarily *Talui, (Suspensus*[a]*,* him that was hanged;) and *ἀνασκολοπισθείς,* (you know,) in the Pagan scoffer's language[b], doth signify him. But as to the thing itself: This part of our Saviour's humiliation is, in the ancient Creeds, expressed more concisely by one word, *Crucifixus: Crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato et sepultus; Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried;* so it goes in the text of Ruffinus, and agreeably in other ancient expositors. But this alteration, (or accession,) it seems, was made (as for the express disclaiming of some heretical conceits that afterward sprung up, denying the real truth of our Saviour's death, so) for the more full and clear representation of the thing, by implying the manner, and main circumstances, and complete effect thereof; for by suffering, I conceive, was intended to express, that what he underwent was in way of judicial process and sentence of law, obtaining force and effect upon him; that he was prosecuted, adjudged, and punished as a malefactor: for the word *πάσχειν* applied as in this case, did, I suppose, (as to suffer doth now in common use with us,) by an *εὐφημισμός,* (a mild and modest kind of speech,) bear this emphasis, importing to be punished with death in a legal course: then being crucified doth shew the kind and manner of that suffering, which was most painful and disgraceful; and being dead, was added to declare the full effect and extreme complement of all; (he

[a] Vid. Grot de. Verit. II. 2.

[b] [*Τὸν μέγαν γοῦν ἐκεῖνον ἔτι σέβουσιν ἄνθρωπον, τὸν ἐν τῇ* Παλαιστίνῃ *ἀνασκολοπισθέντα, ὅτι καινὴν ταύτην τελετὴν εἰσήγαγεν ἐς τὸν βίον.*—Lucian. de Morte Peregr. § 11.]

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so suffered, was so crucified, as thereby to lose his life.) Let us somewhat ponder upon these particulars distinctly, then consider altogether.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate. *Suffered:* that is, I say, in my apprehension, underwent judgment and punishment as a malefactor. I deny not but the word may in signification extend to all the infirmities, inconveniences, pains, and sorrows that our Saviour did undergo, both in the course of his ministerial performances, and chiefly before his death; but I think those sufferings of his rather considerable upon other accounts (as consequents upon our nature assumed, adjuncts to his condition, and concomitants of his passion) than here directly intended; for to interpret ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, in Pontius Pilate's time, so as to respect any time before our Saviour's being accused and arraigned before him, seems a stretch and a strain. Suffered, here, I therefore take for punished, in way of seeming justice, as a malefactor. That he should thus suffer, God had determined; and it was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, that he should be numbered among the transgressors: and St Paul tells us, that *God made him sin for us,* (that is, ordered that he should be dealt with as a sinful or criminous person,) *who knew no sin,* (was perfectly innocent, and free from the least tendency to any fault:) and we see in the history, that he was impeached of high crimes; as a blasphemer against God, (assuming to himself the title, power, and properties and prerogatives of God;) as a seditious and rebellious person, perverting, or stirring up, the nation, and hindering to give tribute to Cæsar, and pretending that he was Christ, a king; as a deluder and seducer of the

Vid. Matt. xvi. 21. Luke ix. 22.

Luke xxii. 37. Mark xv. 28. Isa. liii. 12. 2 Cor. v. 21.

John v. 18; x. 33. Matt. xxvi. 61, 65. Luke xxiii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 63. John vii. 12; xviii. 30.

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people; in general, as a κακοποιός, a criminal person and malefactor: and that he was condemned, (though by a sentence extorted against the conscience of the judge, by malicious importunity of the accusers,) and suffered in pretence as such, is clear, and confessed on all hands. And that we may the better admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this dispensation, let us meditate upon the reasons why it was so ordered. To which purpose we may consider,

1 That as our Saviour did choose to live a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so for the same reasons he would die a death of all most bitter and uncomfortable: such is to our nature the death of a malefactor; there is nothing to man's nature (and especially to honest, ingenuous, and well-disposed nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinguished or decayed) more abominable. God hath put into us, for good purposes, a lively sense of all disgrace, and of all disgraces, that which proceeds from imputation of odious crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of innocence doth increase the smart; and to perceive ourselves to die under it (to leave this world with such an irreparable stain upon our reputation and memory) is still more grievous: to languish by degrees, and endure the torments of a long and sharp disease, all ingenuous persons would much rather choose, than in this manner, being esteemed and dealt with as a villain, to find a present and easy despatch: we see somewhat of this resentment breaking forth in our Saviour, and how man's nature discovered itself in that question, *Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?* Yes; he loathed to be so treated, yet

Luke xxii. 52. Matt. xxvi. 55.

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chose it as he did other the worst inconveniences incident to our nature and to that low condition which he put himself into; to endure want and fare hardly; to be contemned, envied, hated, scorned, and reproached in all the course of his life: he had not been so complete and extreme a sufferer, if he had died any other way. He was oftentimes in danger of death, both from the secret machinations and open violences of those which envied and hated him; but he industriously declined a death so easy, so honourable, (if I may so say: for it is not so great a disgrace to perish by private malice, or by sudden rage, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of men in public place, credit, and authority:) he shewed his disciples, say the Gospels, that it was incumbent upon him (ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν) to suffer many things, ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, *to be rejected*, or *reprobated*, ἐξουδενοῦσθαι, *to be vilified and made nothing of*, by the chief priests, and elders, and scribes; to be condemned to death, and delivered to the Gentiles, εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified. Thus would our Saviour suffer, not only in his body, by bruises and wounds; in his soul, by most bitter sorrows; but in his name and reputation, by the worst of ignominies; undergoing, as well all the infamy, as the infirmity that did belong to or could befall us: thus by all means shewing his charity, and exercising his compassion, and advancing his merit for us.

John v. 18; x. 32. 38; viii. 37, 40, 59; vii. 19, 25.

Matt. xx. 18; xvi. 21. Luke ix. 22. Mark ix. 12.

2 Again; death by public judgment, as a malefactor, did agree to the nature of his undertaking, was congruous to his designs in dying; did aptly represent what he was doing, and signify why he did it. We were guilty; we deserved condemnation;

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extreme pain and shame were due to us for our sins; he undertook to satisfy for us, and therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment; was reputed, was called, was dealt with as a malefactor in our stead. What we had really done; dishonoured and usurped upon God; disordered and troubled the world; deceived and seduced ourselves and others, (by our negligent mistakes and our wilful miscarriages, our evil practices and examples,) that was imputed to him; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all:* he not only bore an equivalent punishment, but in a manner an equal blame with us. Isai. liii. 6.

3 Add hereto, that since it was determined he should die for us, and that not in a natural but a violent manner, and that to satisfy Divine justice; it was fit he should do it in that way wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it might most plainly appear, that God did exact and take, Christ did yield unto and undergo punishment: All judgment is God's, (as Moses tells us,) performed by authority derived from him; all magistrates are his officers; by them he orders and governs the world: what therefore is done in a way of formal judgment by persons of authority, God himself may be said in an especial manner to do, as being done by his commission, in his stead, in his behalf. It was therefore an act of submission to God's justice, becoming the person he sustained, (of our Surety and our Saviour,) to undergo such a judgment and such a punishment. Seasonably therefore did our Saviour answer Pilate, vouching his authority, *Thou* Deut. i. 17. John xix. 11.

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hadst no power at all over (or *against*) *me, except it were given thee from above:* it was in regard to that supreme and original authority of God, that our Saviour subjected himself to these inferior and subordinate powers, as the proper instruments of God's justice. Had he suffered in any other way, (by any private malice or passion of men,) God's providence had been less visible, Christ's obedience not so remarkable; and if he must die by public hands, it must be as a criminal, upon pretence of guilt; there must be testimonies produced, however false; there must be a sentence pronounced, though partial and unjust: no man is prosecuted or persecuted by authority, without some colour of desert.

4 Further, in no other way perhaps could our Saviour display (with such advantage) all manner of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and our benefit; whether we consider the occasions to exercise his virtue, or the means of shewing it. The judgment-hall, with all the streets that led him thither, and thence to execution, attended by guards of soldiers, and accompanied by clamours of the people, were so many theatres, whereupon he had opportunity (convenience and leisure) publicly to act the parts of the highest and hardest virtues; to declare his courage and constancy in defence of truth and maintenance of a good conscience; his meekness and patience in bearing the greatest affronts and reproaches, injuries and calumnies the worst imaginable; his entire resignation to God's will; his submission and obedience to man's law and authority; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in praying for, yea in suffering all this for the good of those, who in a manner so despiteful, injurious, and

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cruel, did persecute him: all these graces and virtues, by the matter being thus ordered, were, in a degree most high, in a manner most conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the confirmation of our faith; an instruction, encouragement, and inducement of good practice to us.

Neither must we omit to consider the further emphasis that lies in the word suffer, which implies our Saviour not only to have been dealt with as a malefactor, but to have really endured what a man in that case might or should do: that he was sensible and affected (according to the frame of human nature) with the pain, disgrace, and shame, and all evils whatever did appear to attend his passion: as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, accordingly were the pains that he felt, both in body and soul, most sharp and afflictive. Some men may fondly pretend to, or falsely glory in, a stupid apathy, or a stubborn contempt of all those evils to which our nature is subject: our Saviour did not so, but with a quiet submission and sweet composedness of mind resented them; as God intended we should do when he implanted sense and passion in our natural constitution, and ordered objects to affect and afflict them, for our use and advantage. He grieved at present evils, even to a degree of excessive anguish, trouble, and agony, (*περίλυπος, ἀδημονεῖν, γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ, ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται*, are words used to express his sorrowful resentment;) he feared future evils, to a degree of horror and an amazement, (to an *ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι*; that is, to be affrighted and astonished:) such height of passion did the sense of

Mark xiv. 34. Matt. xxvi. 38. Luke xxii. 44. John xii. 27. Mark xiv. 33.

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present pangs, the foresight of impending evils, the apprehension of his own, the consideration of our state, raise him to: such a burden, all the sins of mankind to lie upon his shoulders, no wonder if he groaned under it: God's displeasure flaming out against sin, no wonder it did terrify him: such a Father (whom he so dearly loved) frowning upon, and hiding his face from him, it might well trouble him: such a pity, such a love, contemplating man's sinfulness, feeling his misery, it is not strange that it should affect him. But I must pass over this most large and fruitful subject of meditation.

Thus, and for such reasons and to such purposes, (as I conceive,) did our Saviour suffer or undergo judgment and punishment.

It is added, *under Pontius Pilate,* ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου; where the preposition ἐπί may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen, (in the time of Pontius Pilate's government or presidency over Judæa; so ἐπί is frequently used,) or it may further imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion, (by or under Pontius Pilate, as president and judge; so the word is sometimes used.) Neither of these senses, I suppose, were distinctly, but both conjunctly intended here, in relation to the Gospel history; the which here (as to the main passages) we are supposed to know, and profess to believe: neither do I think any more of mystery designed, beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's person; the declaration of whom we believe in; by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the time when; the person under whom; and consequently the place where; and

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somewhat of the manner how he suffered. However, all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice.

The time (in itself most fit, and agreeable to Divine predictions) doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, and confirm his veracity, constancy, and fidelity: when the fulness of time was come; when the world was in the most general peace and deepest calm, and consequently men's attention more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction; when the greatest (or the most considerable) part of the world was united under one empire, and so more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual commonwealth, (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction;) when mankind generally was better civilized, inquisitive after knowledge, and receptive of truth; when the sceptre of legislation and supreme authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish temple yet stood, but not long before its destruction; when the seventy hebdomades (of years) were near expiring, (the time when the Messias should be cut off;) in short, when all things were duly prepared and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion and other performances, then did he suffer and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified, and predicted. I might add, the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

Dan. ix. 26.

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As for the person whom; if we consider him as a Roman stranger, as a governor and judge, according to his personal qualities, or according to his deportment in this affair, something in all these respects may offer itself observable. He was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel; so Jews and Gentiles conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so (in type and mystery) *Every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews should deliver our Saviour up to the Gentiles, (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,) to mock, and scourge, and crucify him. The Jews out of envy and malice delivered up, accused, prosecuted, instigated, and importuned against him; the Gentiles out of ignorance, profaneness, and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him: whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind in some sort did appear, and was aptly represented; and in consequence thereof his infinite goodness is demonstrated, who for so impious, unjust, flagitious a generation, for such malicious enemies and cruel persecutors, did willingly suffer: he suffered for them by whom he suffered. I might add, that a stranger was more likely to be a fair and indifferent judge, and to do what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial. Consider Pilate as a governor and judge, for so he was; Cæsar's procurator, and president of Judæa, (ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμών;) and therein we may discern the wisdom and special providence of God punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of justice; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and man, (though in a case of plain outrage and highest

Rom. iii. 19.

Matt. xx. 19.

Matt. xxvii. 18.

Rom. v. 6, 8. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Rom. v. 10. Col. i. 21.

Matt. xxvii. 2, &c.

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injustice against himself;) the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed to him by God, and the venerable name of justice, were so abused. So that if ever, then one might have said with the Wise Man, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.* Eccles. iii. 16.

As for this Pilate's personal qualities, he is reported, by the historians[c] near those times, to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper; wilful and haughty in spirit; rapacious, violent, and cruel in his proceedings; and was therefore a proper instrument of providence for the execution of such a business, so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villainous and barbarous according to man's intention: such an one deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so base and execrable, was worthy to be employed, might be ready to undertake therein: it had not been so plausible in itself, that such an act should, nor so credible that it could, proceed from any person of good disposition or right intention. But of him it could not be improbable, who, by his former violences, (such as upon their complaints did soon after remove him from his charge[d],) had so incensed the Jews, that he should not stick to gratify them in a matter that they so earnestly concerned themselves in, and which in semblance (setting apart considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor and inconsiderable (in outward shew) a person, however in his own Mark xv. 15.

[c] Philo Jud. [De Leg. ad Caium § 38, Opp. Tom. II. p. 590. Ed. Mang.]
Joseph. [Antiq. XVIII. 3, 2. De Bell. Jud. II. 9, 4.]

[d] Joseph. Antiq. XVIII. [4, 2.]

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conscience most innocent, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage. Such he was; and yet it is observable, that he behaved himself, in comparison of the furious Jews, with some moderation and ingenuity. He was so fair in examination of the case, as, notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and declare our Saviour guiltless: he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the Jews, and once, twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?* As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention) to free the innocent person; yet had he not the heart or the honesty thoroughly to resist their importunity; they were more obstinate in their wicked, than he resolute in his good purpose: so out of fear to offend them, and favour to oblige them, (those usual corrupters of right judgment,) he yielded to them; suffering himself basely to be overborne by their wicked solicitations, sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest and their implacable malice. Thus did this heathen judge behave himself, serving divine Providence, not only in the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due to us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame in himself; in outward shew he condemned our Saviour; in truth he condemned himself (his corrupt judge) and the Jews (his malicious accusers): though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation, and afforded a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence: such as was requisite to confute all the Jewish calumnies and aspersions, and to confirm our faith.

John xix. 6.

Luke xxiii. 14, &c. Acts iii. 13.

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Furthermore: the name of Pontius Pilate intimates the place of our Saviour's passion, he being well known to have been governor of Judea, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother city thereof, Jerusalem; at Jerusalem, that bloody city, as the Prophet calls it, whose character it was to be the killer of the prophets, and stoner of them that were sent unto her; out of which it was (in a manner) impossible that a prophet should perish; yet the place of all the world most favoured and graced by God by special benefits and privileges; his own proper seat, (the city of God, the city of the great King, so it is styled,) which he had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel (out of all the people upon earth) to put his name (to place his especial presence) there; the holy, the beloved city: there, at his own doors, as it were, before his own sacred palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the chief priests and elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him, (whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure honour to God and obedience to his commandments:) which as it greatly advances the goodness of him who willingly suffered there, and by such, so it much aggravates man's ingratitude and iniquity.

Ezek. xxii. 2; xxiv. 6.

Luke xiii. 33, 34.

Ps. xlviii. 1; lxxxvii. 3.

Deut. xii. 5. Neh. i. 9. 1 Kings xi. 36. Ezra vi. 12. Rev. xx. 9.

It follows, *Crucified;* whereby is expressed the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion; which was by being affixed to a cross, (that is, to a kind of gibbet or *patibulum,*) mainly consisting of two beams, (or pieces of wood,) one erect, to which the

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length of his body was applied and fastened by nails; the other transverse, to which, his arms being stretched out, his hands were nailed: which kind of suffering we may briefly consider as most bitter and painful; as most ignominious and shameful; as agreeable and advantageous to the designs of our Saviour's suffering; as significant and emblematical; as completory of Divine predictions and presignifications; in fine, as instructive, admonitory of duty, and excitative of devotion, to us.

1 We may easily imagine what acerbity of pain must be endured in his limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentered, and continuing in that posture; in the piercing his hands and his feet (parts most exquisitely tender and sensible) with sharp, hard iron nails; so that (as it is said of Joseph) *The iron entered into his soul,* or *His soul entered into iron;* in abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching, wind beating upon, weather searching his grievous sores and wounds: such a pain it was; and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but very acute, and withal lingering: we see, in the story, he and those that suffered with him had both presence of mind and time to discourse; three long hours and more he continued under such torment, sustaining every minute beyond the pangs of an ordinary death; so that well may that in the Lamentations be applied to his suffering state; *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.* Such a kind of suffering did our Saviour choose to undergo, declaring the excess of his love, (in being ready to endure the saddest afflictions and smarts

Ps. cv. 18. Heb. et Septuag.

Lam. i. 12.

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for us;) signifying the heinousness of our sins, (deserving so extreme punishment;) exemplifying the hardest duties of obedience and patience to us.

2 And as most sharp and afflictive in pain, so most vile and shameful was this kind of suffering. It was *Servile supplicium, (Quod etiam homine libero, quamvis nocente, videatur indignum*[e],) a punishment never by the Romans (under whom our Saviour suffered) legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves, (such as were scarce regarded as men, or in life, having forfeited, as it were, made away, or quite lost themselves;) and among the Jews, that punishment which approached nearest, and in part agreed therewith, (for they had no such cruel or inhuman kind of punishment appointed by their Law,) hanging up the dead bodies of such as had been executed, was accounted most infamous and abominable; *Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree,* upon a *patibulum,* says the Law: cursed; that is, addicted to reproach and malediction: cursed of God, (the Hebrew hath it;) that is, doth seem to be deserted and rejected and afflicted of God. In the very nature of the thing, to be raised on high, and for a good continuance of time offered to the view of all that pass by, doth beget ill suspicion and provoke censure; invites obloquy, scorn, and contempt; draws forth language of derision, despite, and detestation, (especially from the rude and hard-hearted multitude, who think and speak according to event and appearance; who—*Sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit Damnatos*[f]: so we see that the people did mock, and jeer, and revile, (ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν,)

Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13.

Luke xxiii. 35, 36. Matt. xxvii. 39.

[e] Lact. Inst. IV. [26.]

[f] [Juv. Sat. X. 73.]

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Vid. Ps. xxii. drawing up their noses, shooting out their lips, and shaking their heads, and letting loose their tongues against him, in this condition; (the same men who had formerly admired his glorious works, and had been affected with his excellent discourses; who Matt. xxi. 9; ix. 33. Luke iv. 15. had followed, and favoured, and blessed, and glorified him.) *They look and stare upon me,* is a part Ps. xxii. 17. of the description of his suffering; (answering to Luke xxiii. 35. that in St Luke, εἱστήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν; *The people stood gazing* upon him;) and Heb. x. 33. θεατρίζεσθαι, to be made a gazingstock, (or object of reproach,) we see, is reckoned by the Apostle as an aggravation of affliction. Hence became it such a scandal, &c.

Heb. xii. 2. Thus did our Saviour endure the cross, despising the shame: (despising; that is, not simply esteeming it as no evil, but not esteeming it so great an evil, as for the avoiding it to neglect the accomplishment of his great and glorious designs.) There is in man's nature an aversation or abhorrency of disgrace, perhaps more strong than that of pain: Heb. xi. 36. mockings and scourgings we find joined together; nor doth pain more grievously affect the animal sense, than being insulted over and despised goes against the grain of men's fancy and natural constitution of soul; and generally men will more contentedly endure the one than the other. We need not therefore doubt, but our Saviour was sensible of this natural evil, and that such indignity did add some degree of bitterness and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction; yet, in consideration of the glory that would accrue to God, the benefit to us, the Gal. iii. 13. reward to himself, he willingly underwent it; *He became a curse for us,* (was exposed to all malediction and reviling from sinful men;) *despised, and*

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rejected, and disesteemed of men, in the Prophet's language; did also seem deserted and rejected by God himself, (himself in a manner concurring in such an opinion, as by his woful outcry, *Lama sabachthani,* doth appear.) So did he become a curse for us, that we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law; (that is, from that exemplary punishment due to our transgression of the Law, with the disgrace before men, and the displeasure of God attending it;) he was contented to be dealt with as a slave, (as a wretched miscreant,) making himself of no reputation, that we might be free, not only from the pain, but from the ignominy we deserved, and with our lives recover both our honour and liberty, which we had forfeited and lost.

Isai. liii. 3, 4.

Matt. xxvii. 46.

Phil. ii. 7.

3 Further: this kind of suffering had some advantages, and did conduce toward our Saviour's design; in being notorious, and in continuing a competent time. If he had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice had been taken of it, nor could the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved, (for the confirmation of faith and conviction of infidelity,) nor had that excellent deportment of his under such affliction (his most Divine patience, meekness, and charity,) so illustriously shone forth. God's providence therefore did order it so, (to prevent all exceptions and excuses of unbelief,) that as the course of his life, so the manner of his death should be most open and conspicuous; *These things,* as St Paul told king Agrippa, *were not done in a corner;* (nor presently hushed up; but were done leisurely, in the face of the world:) *I spoke freely,* saith our Saviour, *to the world; I always taught in the synagogue and in the*

Acts xxvi. 26.

John xviii. 20.

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temple, where the Jews from all places resort; and in secret have I done nothing. His proceedings were not close or clancular, but frank and open; and as he lived, so he died, publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and to embrace his doctrine; according to what himself foretold; *I, being lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto me;* (all men to take notice, by the remarkableness of it; some to believe upon me, by the wondrous consequences of it:) and, *As Moses did exalt the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted;* (that as by beholding the serpent elevated upon a pole men were cured of those mortiferous stings they had received; so by believing on him crucified men should be saved from those destructive and deadly sins they had committed.)

John xii. 32.

John iii. 14, 15.

4 This kind of suffering also seems in many respects significant, and full of instructive emblems. His posture represented that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity, and mercy; with them, as it were, to embrace the whole world, and receive all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection[g]: it shewed him earnestly, as it were, wooing and entreating us to return to God, and embrace the reconciliation he had purchased and did offer; *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people:* God did so of old by his Prophets mediately and figuratively; he did so in our Saviour immediately and properly by

Isai. lxv. 2.

[g] Extendit in passione manus suas, orbemque dimensus est, ut jam tunc ostenderet ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, magnum populum ex omnibus linguis et tribubus congregatum, sub alas suas esse venturum.—Lact. Inst. IV. [26.]

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himself. The cross was, as it were, a pulpit from which our Saviour did exhort to repentance, and preach Divine grace, and offer remission of sins unto us, with action most affecting and pathetical.

His being lifted up may signify and mind us, that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, humility and patience, are conjoined with and do procure exaltation; that the lower we are in humility, the higher we rise in favour, and the nearer approach to heaven; *Whoso humbleth himself,* saith our Saviour, *shall be exalted;* and, *Be you humbled before the Lord, (under the mighty hand of God,) and he shall exalt you,* say with one voice St James and St Peter; and because our Saviour was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God ὑπερυψοῦν, super-exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth, as St Paul teaches us. The cross was a throne, where humility sat in high Majesty, whence patience sat encircled with rays of glory. The same consideration may also mind us how and whence our Salvation comes; that our health comes from above, and by looking upward; that, as in beholding our Saviour upon the cross we must lift up our eyes, so in believing on him we must raise up our hearts to heaven. In that sublimity also did our Saviour shew himself standing erect, not only as a constant sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; *Having,* as St Paul tells us, *spoiled principalities and powers,* (all the principal powers of darkness, hell, sin, and death,) ἐδειγμάτισεν, *he made a solemn shew, triumphing over them upon his cross.* No conqueror loftily seated in his triumphant chariot did ever yield so illustrious a spectacle; no tree was ever clothed

Luke xviii. 14. Matt. xxiii. 12. James iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 6.

Phil. ii. 8, 9.

Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14.

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and adorned with so glorious trophies. To the outward eye and carnal sense our Saviour was exposed to shame and scorn; but to spiritual discerning, all his and our enemies hung there, objects
Matt. xii. 29. Luke xi. 22. of contempt, undone, and overthrown. The Devil, ὁ ἰσχυρός, (that strong and sturdy one,) hung there, bound and fettered, spoiled and disarmed, quite
1 Cor. xv. 54. 2 Tim. i. 10. baffled and confounded: death itself there hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled. The world with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its bewitching pleasures, its fondly admired excellencies, did there hang, all defaced
Gal. vi. 14. and disparaged; *The world is thereby crucified to us, and we unto the world;* so that we cannot glory or truly rejoice in any worldly thing: (for to be splendid in external state can never henceforth be worthily deemed admirable; to be mean and low can never speak a man miserable, since the Lord of glory and fountain of happiness did himself condescend to so low a condition, and became so deep a sufferer: nor can pleasure pretend to make men happy, nor sorrow justly discourage us, since the Son of God by such a step of extreme grief hath ascended into his throne of glory). Our sins (those
1 Pet. ii. 24. sins which our Saviour did in his body ἀναφέρειν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, carry up upon the gibbet) hung there, exposed as trophies of his victories, objects of our
Rom. viii. 3. hatred and horror, by him condemned in the flesh: those manifold enmities, between God and us, between man and himself, between one man and
Eph. ii. 15, 16. another, did all there hang together, abolished in
Col. i. 20. his flesh, and slain upon his cross; *By the blood of which he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth;* together with all those yokes of

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bondage, those ensigns and instruments of vexation to us; those laws that burdened men so much, which set them at such distance and variance, that subjected them to guilt and condemnation unavoidable; that handwriting of ordinances, inducing our obligation to so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was there nailed to the cross[h]; our bonds thereby cancelled, our debts expunged. Col. ii. 14.

Our Saviour's crucifixion, furthermore, did signify how our flesh should be dealt with, how we should mortify the lusts and affections thereof. We must not only imitate and follow our Saviour in his life, but in some sort endeavour to resemble him in his death, συμμορφοῦσθαι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, as St Paul speaks, *to be conformable to his death; become* σύμφυτοι, *planted together with him in the likeness of his death:* συσταυροῦσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ, *be crucified together with Christ; having our old man crucified together with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, so that we no further serve sin; mortifying our earthly members, and putting to death the deeds of the body:* for *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.* His death may fitly represent our death to sin; his cross, the thwarting our vicious desires and inclinations; his grievous pain, the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our soul should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his disgrace, our shame and confusion, with regard to our offences. In his person, further, we may contemplate the state of virtue and goodness in this world, exposed to envy and hatred, to Phil. iii. 10. Rom. vi. 5, 6, &c. Gal. ii. 20. Col. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 13. Gal. v. 24.

[h] Mos est quibusdam in locis clavis transfigendi edicta antiquata.—Grot. in Col. ii. 14.

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censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to all kind of affliction and hardship[1]. Every good man must hang upon some cross or other; εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα, it is our lot and portion assigned us by Divine decree; to a conformity with this image and pattern of the Son of God we are predestinated; δεῖ ἡμᾶς, *We must* (it is both of necessity and duty incumbent on us) *by many tribulations enter into God's kingdom; All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall* (certainly in one way or other) *suffer persecution,* (and partake of the cross.) Many such analogies and resemblances, not unprofitable, might a devout meditation (in imitation of the sacred writers) draw out, for exciting good affections and quickening to duty. But further,

1 Thess. iii. 3. Rom. viii. 29. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

5 We may also (for the fuller confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the Divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it. That most full and clear and famous prophecy concerning our Saviour's passion doth express him suffering as a malefactor, or with malefactors. *He was to be reckoned among transgressors,* suffering in a manner very painful and very despicable (*He was to be wounded for our transgressions, and to be bruised for our iniquities; he was to be despised* and *rejected of men, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;*) which circumstances could not so punctually agree to any other kind of suffer-

Isai. liii. 12, 5, 3.

[1] Passio ipsa per se acerba et amara specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum dabat, quæ in hoc sæculo morantibus virtus ipsa proponit.—Lact. Inst. IV. [26.]

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ing (or punishment) in use as to this. In the 22nd Psalm, the royal Prophet describes an afflicted and forlorn condition, (such as by no passages of his history, in the full extent and according to the literal signification of his words, doth appear suitable to his own person, and therefore more properly is to be applied to the Messias, whom he did represent;) and in that description, among other passages suiting to our Saviour, these words occur; *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death: for dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced* (or *digged*, ὤρυξαν) *my hands and my feet:* which words do most patly and livelily set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross. And in the Prophet Zechariah God foretells, speaking in his own name, *They,* (that is, the Jews, sensible of what they had done, and penitently affected,) *they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced:* which place needs no violence to extort the right meaning from it; no comment to explain or adapt it to the crucifixion of God, our Saviour, to which it is so literally congruous. The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types: Isaac, the immediate son and heir of the promise, (in whom the faithful seed was called, or conveyed down by him,) and so a most apt type of our Saviour, he being devoted and offered to God in sacrifice, did himself bear the wood, by which he was to be offered: so did our Saviour (the promised seed in which all nations should be blessed) himself bear the cross, by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God. Those which were bitten (dangerously) by fiery serpents, were by looking up upon a brazen serpent set upon a pole

Ps. xxii. 15, 16.

Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 37.

Gen. xxii. 6. Rom. ix. 8. James ii. 21. Heb. xi. 17.

Numb. xxi. 9. John iii. 14.

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preserved in life; which (in our Saviour's most authentical interpretation) did represent the salvation which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross, to us, who had been stung and mortally struck with that old serpent's poisonous temptations[k]. The paschal lamb, (that most proper emblem of Christ our passover, that most meek and innocent, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world,) it was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel; its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eat raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roasted whole, and dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken; which circumstances, (with such caution and care prescribed,) how they suit and fitly adumbrate the manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not further than by the bare mention of them to declare.

1 Cor. v. 7. 1 Pet. i. 19. Exod. xii. 5, 6, 9, 46. &c.

Lastly, The consideration of our Saviour's thus suffering is apt to teach and affect us; to admonish us of our duty, and to excite devotion in us: no contemplation is more fruitful or efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and of our lives: the Gospel itself is, in St Paul's language, ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ, *The word of the cross;* and he calls both this and that *The power of God to salvation.*

1 Cor. i. 18. Rom. i. 16.

1 What good affection therefore may not the meditation thereupon raise, what virtue not produce in us!

2 How can it otherwise than inflame our hearts with love, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame our Saviour there willingly

[k] Tertull. adv. Jud. cap. x. [Opp. p. 196 A.]

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undertook and endured for us! No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity; and if love be productive of love, what effect should the consideration of such a love have! Nor can we find a surer ground of trust, and a greater encouragement to hope in God, than this: he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to the suffering of such pains and indignities for us, how can we distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy in any case? What higher favour could he do, how shew greater condescension, how more surely testify his willingness, his delight to do us good? how consequently lay stronger grounds of hope and confidence in us, than by his own free undertaking and undergoing all this for us?

3 What detestation of our sins must it also raise in us, that brought such torture, such reproach upon him! Judas the wretch who betrayed him, the Jewish priests who accused and prosecuted him, Pilate the judge who condemned him, the wicked people that abused and insulted over him, the cruel hands that smote him, the pitiless hearts that mocked him, the blasphemous tongues that railed upon him, those who were instruments of his affliction, how do we detest them, and curse their memories! But our sins, which were the first and main causes of that woful tragedy, how much more reason have we to abhor and abominate them! *He was delivered for our offences,* (they were the traitors, indeed, which by Judas's hands did deliver him;) it was they that cried *Crucifige,* (*Crucify him, crucify him,*) with a clamour more loud and more effectual than did the Jews; it was they that did by their borrowed mouths accuse and

Rom. iv. 25.

Luke xxiii. 21.

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2 Cor. v. 21. prosecute him; *He that knew no sin was made sin for us;* was condemned as a sinner for us: it was we that by our sins did adjudge and sentence him; Pilate was but their agent and spokesman Gal. iii. 13. in it; *He became a curse for us;* all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured proceeded from us; the silly people were but properties, represent- Isai. liii. 5. ing and acting our part; *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:* it was they that by the fierce soldiers and rude rabble, as by senseless engines, did smite and scourge him; by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body.

4 What can in reason be more effectual to breed in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? how can we but vehemently grieve, when we remember ourselves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the scorners, the murderers of God's dear Son, of so innocent and lovely a person, of our best friend, and most loving Saviour?

5 And if ingenuity will not work so much, and melt us into contrition hereby, yet sure this thought must needs produce fear in us: can we but tremble to think of the fierceness of God's displeasure, the severity of Divine judgment, the heinous guilt of our sins, all so plainly discovered, so livelily set out in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget some apprehensions of terror, dread of the law, reverence to authority, what dreadful impressions should this extraordinary example of Divine justice make upon us!

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6 How can it also but deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider that by it we do ἀνασταυροῦν, recrucify, (in a manner renew all that pain and shame; bring up again upon the stage all that dreadful tragedy,) crucify, I say, afresh the Son of God, and again expose him to open shame; that by it we trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood of the covenant (that most precious blood, so freely, yet so sadly shed for us) as a common (a trivial and worthless) thing; despising all his so kind and so painful endeavours for our salvation, defeating his gracious purpose, rendering all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, as to their principal intent, (our good and benefit,) altogether, yea more than vain and fruitless? Heb. vi. 6; x. 29.

7 What, further, can be more operative in producing disesteem, and disregard of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous pleasures; in reconciling us to the worst condition it can bring us into; in comforting us under the heaviest pressures of affliction? Who can admire those splendid trifles, which he never regarded in his life, which only served to mock him at his death? Who can relish those delights, which he living never vouchsafed to taste of, and dying chose to feel their contraries? Who will dare to vilify a state of sorrow and disgrace, which he by the voluntary susception thereof (in such extremity) hath so dignified and graced; by which we resemble, become conformable unto, partake with him, concur with, and, in a manner, complete his design[1]? Who can much prefer being admired, applauded, or made much of by men, before derision, Rev. i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 13. Rom. viii. 17. Phil. iii. 10.

[1] ἀνταναπληροῦν τὰ ὑστερήματα. — Col. i. 24.

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reproach, or persecution from them, (especially for adherence to truth and righteousness?) Who can be very ambitious of honour and repute, or covetous of wealth, or addicted to pleasure, who observes him, the Son of God, the heir of all things, the Lord of glory, choosing rather to ascend a cross than a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, instead of acclamations of praise; embracing the reputation of a malefactor and a slave, before the dignity and respect of a prince; that regards him hanging naked and forlorn upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extremity of pain, yielding, as the Prophet
Isai. l. 6. foretold him, his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; hiding not his face from shame and spitting? Will not the imagination of such a sight sully the lustre of all earthly pomps and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfaction: quash all the content we can take in our wild and extravagant merriments?

8 If such affliction and hardship were to him
Heb. v. 8; ii. 10. a school of obedience, (ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε, *He learnt from what he suffered,* obedience;) a means of perfection, (*It became God,* saith the Apostle, *to perfect the captain of our salvation by suffering;*) a procurement of Divine favour, (*Therefore,* him-
John x. 17. self tells us, *the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life;* and the manner sure did increase
Luke xxiv. 26. that love;) a step to glory, (for, it is said, *Was not Christ to suffer these things, and* (so) *to enter into*
Phil. ii. 9. Heb. ii. 9. *his glory? Therefore God exalteth him; We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour:*) if it yielded such advantages to him,

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and may, by our conformity and compliance with him, afford the like to us, what reason can there be, that we should be anywise discomposed, discouraged, or disconsolate under it? Much more sure there is, that we should, with St Paul, boast, rejoice for joy in our tribulations: *He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple:* and, *He that doth not take up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of me;* saith our Saviour: he that doth not take it up readily, when by providence it is presented; that doth not bear it contentedly, when it is imposed, cannot be our Saviour's disciple, shewing such an incapacity to learn the lessons of humility and patience read by him; to transcribe the copies of submission to Divine will, self-denial, and self-resignation, so fairly set him by Christ's instruction and example: he is nowise worthy of him, hath not the courage, the sincerity, the constancy required of a Christian; one pretending to such benefits, privileges, and rewards from Christ, his Lord and Saviour. The willing susception, the cheerful sustaining of the cross, is the express condition and character of our Christianity, (whence use hath been to sign them who enter into it with the figure of the cross). It is the special ensign of our warfare under Christ against his and our common enemies; the distinct badge of our profession; the chief object of our faith, our knowledge, our preaching, (as St Paul discourses in the first and second chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians;) the main ground of our hope; the sole matter of our glory; ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι: *Far be it from me to glory,* saith St Paul, *save in the cross of Christ:* let it be to the Jews a scandal,

Rom. v. 3. Col. i. 24. Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 23; xiv. 27; ix. 23. Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24.

Gal. vi. 14.

1 Cor. i. 23.

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(offensive to their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Messias flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity;) let it be folly to the Gentile Greeks, (seem absurd to men imbued and puffed up with carnal conceits and maxims of worldly wisdom,) that God should put his own beloved Son into so sad and despicable a condition[m]; that salvation from death and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, happiness, and glory should issue from such springs of extreme sorrow and shame; that a person in outward semblance so contemptible, exposed to so infamous and slavish usage, should be the son of God, the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the world; let this, I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some prejudiced persons; let it seem strange and incredible to other self-conceited men; to us it must be grateful and glorious; to us, who discern by a clearer light, who are endued with a purer sense, derived from the Divine Spirit, whence we may, with a comfortable satisfaction of mind, perceive that God could not in a higher measure, in a fitter method, illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice, his infinite mercy toward his poor creatures, his heavy indignation and severe justice against iniquity; that virtue could not be taught, nor exemplified, nor commended and inculcated any other way with so great advantage. It were easy to allege the suffrages of Plato[n], Seneca[o], and other such men, (wise only by improvement of natural reason,) acknowledging that perfection of

[m] Vid. Orig. con. Cels. Lib. II. p. 79.

[n] De Rep. II. [361 E.]

[o] De Prov. III. [5.]

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virtue can neither be wrought or shewed otherwise than by suffering the bitterest afflictions; that God (as a wise Father) therefore useth to exercise them whom he most loveth with them: nor hard were it to produce examples of men, (even among the Pagans[p],) most famous and honourable in the judgment of posterity for their wisdom and virtue, who have been tried in this furnace, and shone thereby more brightly, suffering by the iniquity, ingratitude, and envy of their times, both in their reputation, liberty, and life, infamous punishments, ignominious deaths; though none of them of choice and upon design to advance the interest of goodness, but by an accidental force put upon them; none in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, with an event so wonderful: so that even according to the passable dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable; neither ought the Greeks, in consistency with themselves and their own most admired philosophers, have deemed the doctrine of the cross to be foolish, or unreasonable: since thereby a charity and humanity so unparalleled, (far exceeding theirs, who have been celebrated for love to their country, or a more prevalent love of praise devoting their lives[q],) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for instruction and direction of men: since never were the vices and vanities of the world (both so destructive to the quiet and welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged and condemned: since

[p] Socrates, Phocion, Aristides, Seneca, Thraseas, Helvidius Priscus, &c.

[q] Vicit amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido.

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never virtue had so powerful an effect (the expiation of the whole world's sin and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no other performance, no sacrifice could ever pretend to) nor so glorious a reward; sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, everlasting happiness to them that follow it: since, I say, there be such excellent uses, fruits, and consequences of the cross undergone by our Saviour, we have no reason to be offended nor to
1 Cor. i. 18, &c. be ashamed thereof; but rather heartily to approve, and humbly to adore, as well the wisdom of God, as other his glorious attributes, so conspicuously demonstrated and displayed therein.

But I have not been able to contain myself, and have dwelt too long upon this most rich and fruitful argument.

Dead.

Our Saviour's passion (as we did observe formerly) was in the first draughts of this Creed expressed by one single word, *Crucifixus:* but afterwards (whether to discountenance some heretical devices contradicting the real truth of our Saviour's death, or for the more full and clear representation of the thing itself) its description was dilated, and expressed by three words, signifying the quality thereof: he suffered, that is, was dealt with as a malefactor; another shewing the manner of it, he underwent that most painful and disgraceful punishment of crucifixion; a third denoting the final completion thereof, he lost his life thereby. The two former we have largely discoursed upon; the last remains, being the consummation of his grievous passion, the bottom of that bitter cup he willingly

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drank off for us; foreseeing the approach of which, he pronounced the τετέλεσται, *It is finished.* Concerning which we may consider, John xix. 30.

I. The nature of it, (wherein it did consist).

II. Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, (which commend it to our regard, and render it considerable).

III. The causes and ends, (whence moved, and why he died).

IV. The fruits and effects of it, (what did especially spring from, what consequences there were of his dying).

V. The practical influences, the belief and consideration thereof may or should have upon us.

I. As for the nature of it; we must affirm and believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper death, not in kind different from that death to which all we mortal men by the law and condition of our nature are subject, and must all sometime undergo; *For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* that death which is signified by the cessation of vital operations, of all motion, natural or voluntary; of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion: that death which is caused by the violent disunion or dislocation; by distempering; by whatsoever indisposing the parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no longer in and by them exercise those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein[r]: that death which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of Ps. lxxxix. 48.

[r] Ἐπεί κε πρῶτα λίπῃ λευκὸ ὀστέα θυμός·
Ψυχὴ δ', ἠΰτ' ὄνειρος, ἀποπταμένη πεπότηται.—Hom. Od. xi. 220.

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that vital band (whatever it be) whereby the soul is linked and united to the body; or in that, which is thereupon consequent, the departure, separation, and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles, as it were; *The body to the earth, whence it was taken; and the spirit unto God who gave it,* as it is in the Preacher. Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied; such a state is expressed, in the same terms, whereby our death is commonly signified. The same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood (which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motion, exhaust our spirits, extrude our breath) did work upon and necessarily produce the like effects upon him, as having assumed the common infirmities and imperfections of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him, he is said to be slain, to be despatched, to be cut off, to be taken away, to be destroyed, to be slaughtered, to be sacrificed, (ἀποκτείνεσθαι, διαχειρίζεσθαι, ἀναιρεῖσθαι, ἀπολέσθαι, σφάττεσθαι, θύεσθαι,) which words fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him. And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judged him dead; and therefore, ὡς εἶδον ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *Seeing him already dead,* they forbare to break his legs; by the same all the world being satisfied thereof; both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him, and his loving friends, that with compassionate respect

Eccl. xii. 7. Gen. iii. 19. Ps. civ. 29.

Matt. xxvii. 20. Acts v. 30. Dan. ix. 26. Isai. liii. 8. John xviii. 14; xi. 50. Rev. v. 9.

John xix. 33.

Mark xiv. 41, 42.

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attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness in procuring the decent burial of his body. His transition also into, and his abiding in, this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death, such as was before described: St Mark tells us, (that ἐξέπνευσε, *animam efflavit, He breathed out his soul,* or *breathed out his last breath; He expired:*) St Matthew, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit: He let go his spirit,* or *gave up the ghost,* St John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα; *He delivered up his spirit* into God's hands: St Luke mentions it done with a formal and express resignation; *Father, into thy hands I commend* (or *depose,* παρατίθεμαι) *my spirit.* Himself also frequently expresses his dying by laying down his life; by bestowing his life a ransom; which shews him really to have parted with it. His death likewise (as ours commonly by *excedere e vivis,* and like phrases) is termed ἔξοδος, a going out of life, a leaving the society of men; Moses and Elias are said to tell τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem; and μετάβασις, a passing over from this world; *When,* saith St John, *Jesus knew that his time was come,* ἵνα μεταβῇ, *that he should depart from this world.* His death also by himself is enigmatically described by the destruction (or demolishment) of his bodily temple, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our common death; in St Paul, *The dissolution of our earthly house* or *tabernacle,* (or *transitory abode;*) in St Peter, ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματος, *The laying down,* or *putting off, our tabernacle.*

Luke xxiii. 27. John xix. 25. Mark xv. 37. Matt. xxvii. 50. John xix. 30. Luke xxiii. 46. John xv. 13; x. 15, 18, &c.; xiii. 37. 1 John iii. 16. Luke ix. 31. John xiii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 1. 2 Pet. i. 14.

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It were also not hard to shew, how all other phrases and circumlocutions by which human death is expressed either in the Scripture, or in usual language, or, indeed, among philosophers and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence from what is expressed appear applicable, to our Saviour: such, for instance, as these in Scripture; ἀνάλυσις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither, whence they came; ἀπόλυσις, a being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, a going abroad, or abiding abroad; a peregrination, or absenting from the body; an ἔκδυσις, putting off, or being divested of the body; an ἀφανισμός, disappearing, ceasing (in appearance) to be; going hence, and not being seen; a falling on sleep; resting from labours; to sleep with his fathers; a being added unto our fathers, gathered to our people; being taken or cut out of the land of the living; going down into the pit; lying down, resting, sleeping in the dust, &c. making our bed in darkness. These and such like phrases occurring in Scripture, (which might be paralleled out of common speech and more learned discourses,) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in, the state of that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be shewed applicable to the death of our Saviour. But I will not further insist upon confirmation of a point so clear, and never questioned but by the wild and presumptuous fancies of some heretics.

2 Tim. iv. 6. Phil. i. 23. Luke ii. 29. 2 Cor. v. 8. 4. Acts xiii. 36. Gen. xxv. 8; xlix. 33, &c. Ps. xxxix. 13. Jer. xi. 19. Ps. lii. 5; xxviii. 1; cxliii. 7; lxxxviii. 4. Isai. xxxviii. 18. Ezek. xxvi. 20, &c. Job vii. 21; xvii. 16; xx. 11; xxi. 26. Dan. xii. 2. Isai. xxvi. 19.

Our Saviour's death then was a true, real, and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible, mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undertake for us;

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to the condition of sinful flesh, in the likeness of which he did appear; separating his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources. His passion was, indeed, *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest in the last result which either the fiercest injustice or the severest justice could in this world inflict; for to kill the body is, as our Saviour teaches us, the extreme limit of all human power and malice; the most and worst man can do; they have not περισσότερόν τι, any thing beyond that, which they can attempt upon us: and so far they proceeded with our Saviour: the willing undergoing of which also is the highest expression of kindness, (if it be done upon that account;) for, *Greater love than this hath no man, than that one lay down his life for his friends:* the greatest attestation to the truth; the perfectest instance of obedience, submission, and patience respectively: to assert truth, to follow righteousness, to adhere to conscience, to resist sin, μέχρις αἵματος, as far as to blood, (as it is in the 12th to the Hebrews,) not to love our life, ἄχρι θανάτου, (unto the death, when death is threatened,) is the utmost that man can do. But,

Rom. viii. 3. Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4. John xv. 13. Heb. xii. 4. Rev. xii. 11.

II. We may consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Saviour's death, (annexing thereto hereafter in our discourse, for avoiding repetition, his whole passion generally taken, whereof his death was the chief part and final completion;) those adjuncts, I say, and those respects which commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof; its being a result of God's eternal deliberation and decree; a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only

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Son; its being anciently prefigured and predicted; its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding, by man's action concurring; its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent; of the Son of God, yea, of God himself.

1 It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised; but a design from all eternity, contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness: as God did then foresee our lapse and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy; as the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so did especially this main part thereof, proceed

Eph. iii. 11. κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, *According to an eternal*
Rev. xiii. 8. *purpose:* for our Saviour was a *Lamb slain from*
1 Pet. i. 19, 20. *the foundation of the world: We were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot;* προεγνωσμένου μὲν, *foreordained, indeed, before the foundation of the world:* our Saviour went (he tells us) to suffer

Acts ii. 23. κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον, *According to what was determined;* it was *By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,* that he was delivered up to those wicked hands that slew him: nor did the conspiracy of

Acts iv. 28. Herod and Pilate with the nations and people of the Jews effect any thing therein beyond ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ καὶ ἡ βουλὴ Θεοῦ προώρισε γενέσθαι, *Whatever the hand and the counsel of God had predestinated to be performed.* God's so great care and providence, so expressly commended to our observation, do argue the high worth and consequence of this death.

2 It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and our Saviour. God freely

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proffered, if he would undertake to redeem his creature, a comfortable and honourable success thereto; he willingly embraced the condition; *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering, thou shalt see thy seed and prolong thy days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand: thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied;* that was God's proposition: *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,* was our Saviour's answer in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of his sufferings, did διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν, covenant to him a kingdom; commit to him a sovereign authority, assign him an universal dominion: in virtue of which transaction it was, that *Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour;* that *He pouring out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great;* that *He being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names.* In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given to him, as a retribution to him who gave himself for them; that we are said to be bought by him, and to be the Church purchased by his blood. There was therefore a covenant between God and his Son concerning this affair: and of great consideration surely must that affair be, wherein such Persons (if I may so speak) so interest themselves, do traffick, as it were, and stand upon terms with each other.

Isai. liii. 10, 11. Heb. x. 7, 8. Luke xxii. 29. Heb. ii. 9. Isa. liii. 12. Phil. ii. 8, 9. Rom. i. 4. Gal. iii. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Pet. i. 19. Acts xx. 28.

3 Further; that the excellency and efficacy of this death and passion might appear, it was by manifold types foreshadowed, and in divers prophecies foretold. Indeed, most famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) seem to

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have been preludes unto and prefigurations of his passion: the blood of the righteous protomartyr Abel, shed by envy, for acceptable obedience to God's will, and crying for vengeance, seems to have prefigured that blood, which cried also, though with another voice, and spake better things than the blood of Abel; not complaints and suits for vengeance, but entreaties and intercessions for mercy. Isaac, the only son, the son of promise, his oblation in purpose, and death in parable[s], (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaks,) did plainly represent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward restored to life. Joseph's being sold and put into slavery by his envious brethren; being slanderously accused and shut in prison, (*Whose feet they hurt with fetters; the iron entered into his soul;*) and this by God's disposal, in order to his exaltation, that he might be a means to preserve life, and prepare convenient habitation for the children of Israel, doth resemble him, who by suffering entered into glory; who being thereby perfected, became author of salvation to his brethren, all true Israelites; who went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen, for them. David's persecutions preceding his royal dignity and prosperous state, (which he expresses in no lower strain than by saying, *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid: the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me,*) how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Saviour's affliction, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as

Luke xi. 51. Gen. iv. 10.

Heb. xii. 24; xi. 4.

Ps. cv. 18.

Gen. xlv. 5.

Luke xxiv. 26.

Heb. v. 9.

John xiv. 2.

Ps. xviii. 4, 5.

[s] Ἐν παραβολῇ.—Heb. xi. 17, 19.

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also the rest of such passages, of a like mysterious importance. However all the sacrifices of old, instituted by God, we may more confidently affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice; by virtue, indeed, of which those ὑποδείγματα and σκιαὶ, those umbratic representations obtained any validity or effect: if they did not signify this in design, they could signify nothing in effect: for as *Without shedding of blood there was no remission,* (God's anger could not be appeased, his justice could not be satisfied without it; it being blood that maketh atonement for the soul, God so requiring, as it is in the Law,) which the institution of those sacrifices did speak and signify; so it was impossible, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; that those legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service; that is, entirely assure him of pardon and impunity. The soul of beasts were not in value suitable, could not fitly be surrogated in the stead of men's souls, which had offended, and were therefore liable to death: the effusion of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a man's conscience, sensible of guilt, and fearful of God's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased: they must therefore refer unto a better sacrifice, more sufficient in itself, more acceptable to God, in virtue of, in respect to which sin might be thoroughly expiated, God's vengeance removed, man's mind comforted and contented. The high-priest's solemn entrance, once a year, into the holy of holies, not without blood, to atone for his own and the people's ignorances, did imply, that our

Heb. ix. 23; viii. 5.

Heb. ix. 22.

Levit. xvii. 11.

Heb. x. 4; ix. 9, 15.

Heb. ix. 23.

Heb. ix. 7.

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great High-Priest should make a bloody atonement for the sins of mankind, and passing through the veil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true
Heb. x. 20. *Sancta sanctorum* of heaven, there to appear in the
Exod. xii. presence of God for us. The Paschal lamb especially, in its substance, (as a lamb, meek and gentle;) in its quality, without blemish or spot, (holy and innocent;) in its manner of preparation and dressing, (being killed by all the assembly, having its blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house; being roasted with fire; having bitter herbs for its sauce;) with other observable circumstances, was a most apposite emblem of Christ our Passover, who not only by his death did signify and mind us of, but really effect, our deliverance from the mystical Egypt, our state of spiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit; and plain predictions also did express the same death and suffering of our
Acts iii. 18. Saviour; *Those things,* saith St Peter, *which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled:* not one prophet only, but all (either plainly, or covertly; either directly, or by consequence) have shewed it: it is our negligence or stupidity, if we do not dis-
Luke xxiv. 25, 26. cern it: *O fools, and slow of heart,* saith our Saviour,
Vid. Luke xviii. 31. Acts xxvi. 23; viii. 27—35. *to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ* (according to their predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*
Vid. Ps. xxii. cix. &c. lxxii. That David, an illustrious representative of the Messias, doth often, as belonging to himself, describe mortal agonies and suffering, not applicable κατὰ λέξιν, in direct historical meaning, to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a higher and truer sense, to be understood of the

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Messias; that Daniel expressly foretells both the thing and the time, that and when the Messias should be cut off; that Isaiah in several places doth insinuate, and in the famous fifty-third chapter of Isaiah doth clearly describe, the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that the Jews themselves have acknowledged there must be one Messias to suffer, as another to triumph and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend the consistency between antecedent suffering and consequent glory; (between a night of darkness and sorrow, and a day of light and joy breaking out from it;) not to distinguish between an external pomp in this, and an eternal majesty in the future state. But to us God's so forward care, by the Spirit of Christ in his prophets, προμαρτύρεσθαι, as St Peter speaks, to forewitness (to testify beforehand) the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding, doth imply with what attention we should regard, with what firmness of faith embrace this article. 1 Pet. i. 11

4 We may consider also, that this death was executed by God's especial providence directing and disposing it; though not without man's active concurrence. The treacherous disposition and covetous appetite of Judas; the envious humour and blind zeal of the priests; the wanton fickleness and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the governor, were but instruments, by which God's own hand did inflict this sore chastisement upon his own Son for us; it was the Lord that laid upon him the iniquities of us all; by God he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted. The Jews with their rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly, Acts iv. 28. Isa. liii. 6, 4. Acts xiii. 27. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

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Acts iii. 17. Luke xxiii. 34. Rom. viii. 32. but God advisedly did accomplish it, (as Peter declares in the Acts:) he did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us: he suspended his bowels of pity, (as it were,) he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of mercy and benignity to us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us. Yet did man also actively concur herein; all mankind (by their representatives, as it were) was involved, as in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered: there was a general conspiracy practised of Jew and Gentile against Acts iv. 27. the life of their Saviour; *Of a truth,* saith St Peter, *against thy holy child, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel.* In the Jews, man's horrid ingratitude, in the Gentiles, his wretched infirmity did appear; which by their active efficacy did signify the meritorious influence they had; that it was man's iniquity and infirmity which did cause our Saviour's death: which thus, as a work of divine Providence, (the most admirable work ever done by Providence,) as an act of human pravity, (the most heinous act ever committed by man,) is considerable.

5 But, immediately, the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend and advance the worth of his death; if, as the Psalmist Ps. cxvi. 15; lxxii. 14. sings, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;* if the spotless candour, the unblem- 1 John iii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 21. ished integrity of a lamb, do make his blood precious, render it a fit and acceptable sacrifice; how valuable the death of a person so holy and 1 Pet ii. 22. innocent, who did not so much as know sin, in Heb. vii. 26. whose mouth no guile was ever found, who was

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removed (at infinite distance) from sinners! If the life of a king be, as David's people told him, worth ten thousand lives, and it be high treason to imagine his death; how considerable must the death be of a person so transcendent in dignity, *The Lord of glory, The Prince of life! Ye denied the Holy and the Just One; ye slew the Prince of life: They crucified the Lord of glory:* so the Apostles aggravate the business. But an infinity of worth and efficacy must needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the Son of God, from his being God. That the immortal God should die, the Most High be so debased, as it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could not be done without huge reason and mighty effect: well might one drop of that royal blood of heaven suffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins.

2 Sam. xviii. 3; xxi. 17.

Acts iii. 14, 15.

1 Cor. ii. 8.

III. But let us consider the causes moving to it, and the ends designed thereby; together with the effects consequent thereupon, (those in nature being either the same, or joined with the ends thereof). The determining it by God, the undertaking of it by our Saviour, were acts most absolutely free and voluntary. On the Father's part: *It pleased the Lord to bruise him,* saith the Prophet; *Behold I come to do thy will;* (that is, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body, according to thy will, as it is expounded in the Epistle to the Hebrews:) *This command,* saith our Saviour, *I received of my Father,* viz. *to lay down my life:* and, *The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?* On our Saviour's part: *None,* saith he, *taketh my life*

Isa. liii. 10.

Ps. xl. 7, 9.

Heb. x. 7.

John x. 18.

John xviii. 11.

John x. 18.

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from me, (it is by no necessity or compulsion;) *but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it*
John vi. 51. *down, and have power to resume it:* and, *The bread which I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for*
Matt. xx. 28. *the life of the world: The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.* The yielding of his
Gal. i. 4. flesh to death was a gift absolutely free; *Who gave himself for our sins, according to the will of God and our Father.*

Thus did this death proceed from the joint wills of God and his Son: yet as the volitions of every wise and understanding agent are in a manner determined or directed by some cause, (and grounded upon some reason,) so the causes and reasons of these voluntary acts in Scripture are declared to have been several. The main impulsive causes were two, (one internally disposing, the other externally inviting,) God's goodness, and man's distress. Mankind lying in a sad and forlorn estate; enslaved to sin, oppressed by Satan, subject to a rigorous law, exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the sense of guilt, fearful of Divine wrath and vengeance; in short, condemned by the sentence of heaven, and by the suffrage of his own conscience, to punishment unavoidable, to misery intolerable; he, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor creature; his bowels of compassion yearned toward him; thence was he moved to provide such a remedy sufficient and suitable to his delivery, for the curing of all those distempers, the removing all those mischiefs. The main spring of all this wonderful performance, (as of all other providential dispensations and actions *ad extra*)

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was that most excellent perfection of God; which in respect to this matter is sometimes termed χρηστότης, benignity, or bounty, (implying the great benefit we receive thence;) sometimes favour or grace, (signifying the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any desert on our part; *By the grace of God he tasted death for every man;*) sometimes love and philanthropy, (intimating the regard God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefited and bettered by him; *Herein God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners Christ died for us: Christ loved us, and delivered up himself an offering and sacrifice to God;*) sometimes mercy, (connoting our bad deserts, our obnoxiousness to justice and punishment;) sometimes pity, (signifying the need we had thereof, our misery and distress). Such were the impulsive causes, disposing and occasioning: to which we may add our sins as the meritorious cause; *He died for our sins; He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him:* he died for us, not as men only, not as miserable, but as sinners: had we been guiltless, there had wanted sufficient cause and just reason of his death: God would not have been angry, justice could have had no pretence or hold; we should not have suffered ourselves, nor could he have suffered for us: *Death is the debt (the wages) due to sin;* which he therefore paid, because we owed and could not discharge it; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and* (therefore) *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Tit. iii. 4. Rom. iii. 24. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Heb. ii. 9. John iii. 16. Tit. iii. 4, 5, &c. Rom. v. 8. Eph. v. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Heb. x. 12. Isai. liii. 5, 6. Rom. v. 8, 9, &c. Rom. vi. 23. Isai. liii. 6.

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As for the ends aimed at, and the effects produced hereby, they are in the Scripture account and expression reckoned various; principally these.

1 The illustrations of God's glory, (by demonstrating and displaying his most excellent attri-
Rom. iii. 25. butes and perfections; *Whom God,* saith St Paul, *hath set forth a propitiation,* εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, *for a demonstration of his righteousness;* that is, of his goodness, his justice, his sincerity, his constancy, and all such laudable perfections which may be used in dealing with others; for so I take righteousness to signify).

2 The dignifying and exaltation of our Saviour himself; by acquiring unto him (as it were) a new right unto, and instating him in an universal dominion; in a transcendent glory, joy, and happi-
Rom. xiv. 9. ness, accruing to him by desert and reward; *For to this end,* St Paul tells us, *Christ died,* ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ, *that he might be Lord of the*
Heb. ii. 9, 10; *dead and living; For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory and honour;* the Prince of our
xii. 2. salvation was perfected by suffering; *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross: He*
Phil. ii. 8, 9. *was obedient unto death; therefore God exalted him:* it was agreed and designed, that *He should*
Isai. liii. 11. *see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.*

Gal. iii. 13. 3 The salvation of mankind; thereby *Redeeming us*[t], as St Paul speaks, (or *buying us out,*) *from the curse of the law,* (procuring idemnity and impunity for us,) justifying us in God's sight, and recon-
Rom. v. 9, 10. ciling us to God's favour; *Being justified,* saith the same Apostle, *by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath: For if, being enemies, we were*

[t] ἐξηγόρασεν.—Gal. iii. 13.

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reconciled to God by the death of his Son: bearing, taking away, expiating, abolishing, procuring pardon for, purging the conscience from, cleansing us from the stain, and freeing us from the power of sin and dead works: *But now,* saith the Author to the Hebrews, *once in the end of the world hath he appeared, εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, to the putting away* (or *abolition*) *of sin by the sacrifice of himself:* and, *The blood of Christ,* saith St John, *cleanseth us from all sin:* and, *Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* and, *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world: Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works: Who shall lay anything to the charge of* (*who shall criminate, τίς ἐγκαλέσει,*) *God's elect? who shall condemn? It is Christ that died.* In subordination unto, coincidence or concurrence with these ends, our Saviour also died, for the reparation of God's honour, recovery of his right, and satisfaction of his justice; for the ratifying the new covenant between God and us; (whence his blood is called the blood of the covenant, or new testament;) for the reconciling and pacifying all things in heaven and earth; removing all causes of dissension, inducing obligations of concord and charity; for pulling out the sting and removing the terror of death; suppressing and triumphing over the powers of hell; *Destroying* (or *defeating*)[u] *him that had the power of death, the Devil; and delivering them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage;* for engaging us

1 Pet. ii. 24. Heb. ix. 14. John i. 29. Heb. ix. 26. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5. Gal. i. 4. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18. Rom. viii. 33, 34. Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14, 15.

[u] καταργήσας.—Heb. ii. 14.

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to all righteousness and obedience, (especially to the most excellent and most difficult parts thereof, charity, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance,) both from our obligation for what he did, and in imitation of his example: lastly, for attestation unto and confirmation of divine truth; sealing his heavenly doctrine by his blood, and witnessing before Pontius Pilate a good confession. Such ends did the death and passion of our Saviour aim at, such fruits did grow from it; which the time hath permitted me scarce cursorily to mention.

1 Tim. vi. 13. John xviii. 37.

As for the practical influences the belief and consideration thereof should have upon us, they are many and great.

It should oblige us to the highest degree of love and thankfulness, in regard to this highest expression of love to us: it should beget in us the greatest faith and hope in God; for that, *He which did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up* (to death) *for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* it should work contrition and repentance in us for those sins which murdered our so good friend and loving Saviour: it should deter and make us carefully to avoid them, as those which in a manner exact another death from him, and crucify him afresh, and vilify the precious blood of the covenant: it should discover to us their heinousness, and produce in us a vehement detestation and dread of them; as having provoked God to such a degree of displeasure; causing him to deal so severely with his own most dear Son; *For if those things were done* (such punishments were inflicted) *upon a green tree,* (upon a person so inno-

John xv. 13. Rom. viii. 32.

Heb. vi. 6; x. 29.

Luke xxiii. 31.

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cent, so precious, so little liable to the fire of vengeance,) *what shall be done to the dry,* (to us, that are so guilty, so combustible,) if we presume to displease God? it should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of ourselves to God's will and providence; *Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should arm ourselves likewise with the same mind,* as St Peter advises; and prepare for the deepest mortification, in conformity to his death, dying after him to the lusts and affections of the flesh, to the fashions and delights of the world; to the fullest measure of charity; for *If God so loved us,* (so as to die for us,) then *ought we,* as St John tells us, *to love one another,* in a degree answerable; for, he adds, *If he laid down his life for us,* then *ought we also to lay down our lives for our brethren:* in fine, we are hereby obliged to yield up ourselves wholly to the service of our Saviour; to the promoting of his interest and glory; since, as St Paul teaches us, *We are not our own, being bought with a price;* and therefore *must glorify God in our body and in our spirits, which are God's;* (by a purchase so dear and precious;) since, as he again tells us, *Christ died for all, that they which live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them;* since, as St Peter urges, *We know that we are not redeemed by things corruptible, by silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish or spot, from our vain conversation.*

1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 5.

1 John iv. 11; iii. 16 Phil. iii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 2. Rom. vi. 5, 6, &c. Gal. ii. 20; v. 24.

1 Cor. vi. 20.

2 Cor. v. 15.

1 Pet. i. 18.

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And Buried. He descended into Hell.

These two particulars, which in the ancient Roman Creed, and in all the Oriental Forms, as also in other more ancient summaries of Christian doctrine, do appear either to have been conjoined and comprehended in the former of them (*Buried*) or at least the latter to have been wholly omitted; it being afterwards inserted here out of the Aquileian form, (which in a manner had it, in the room of the former, that saying instead of *Sepultus est, descendit in inferna*) or from elsewhere, (the latter ages mentioning both, either for more fulness and security, that nothing anywise material, touched in Scripture, concerning our Saviour's person, or performances, especially done in that great season of action preceding his last farewell to this world, might seem neglected,) or perchance upon occasion of (in favour to, or compliance with) some opinions about our Saviour's doings in the interval between his death and resurrection, current and passable in those times: these particulars, however, I say, may seem added in respect chiefly (for the clearer illustration, and surer confirmation of) those great articles precedent and subsequent concerning our Saviour's death and resurrection.

For (as to the first) our Saviour's body being committed to the grave, the common repository of bodies, it plainly demonstrates the truth of his death, the reality and wonderfulness of his resurrection. No life could continue in a body shut up underground till the third day; (sequestred from that air, which ventilates and keeps from smothering our vital flame, from that comfortable light which

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excites and cherishes our natural heat; from that food, which sustains and repairs our decaying parts;) therefore he must, being thus lodged in the chambers of death, be really dead; and to raise him thence, to rear the temple of his body from that utmost state of dejection, must be a work of Divine and most wonderful power. And to this purpose I suppose St Paul mentions our Saviour's burial as a point, which among other great articles of our Religion he did use to preach and inculcate as a matter of faith: *I delivered unto you first of all* (saith he to the Corinthians) *that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins; and that he was buried, and that he rose again, according to the Scriptures.* His burial interceding, gave light and confirmation to his death foregoing, and his resurrection following it: according to the Scriptures, St Paul adds; for it had seemed good to God both by typical representation to foreshew, and expressly to foretell our Saviour's interment. *As Jonas* (saith he himself, the best expositor of God's meaning in such mystical adumbrations) *was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth;* the whale's belly Jonas himself terms the belly of hell: *Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice:* the belly of hell, or of the grave; and *My flesh* (saith David, as representing our Saviour) *shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* The grave was the bed wherein our Saviour's flesh did rest, in expectation soon to rise again before any corruption should seize thereon. And the Prophet Esay treating

1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

Matt. xii. 40.

Jonah ii. 2.

Ps. xvi. 9, 10.

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upon his Passion, with the causes, the manner, the consequences thereof, doth not omit the mention of
Isai. liii. 9. this point: for, says he, *He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*[x]. So God pre-ordained, and so predicted concerning our Saviour's burial for the confirmation of our faith, though perhaps other ends might fall in therewith, and other not inconsiderable uses may be made thereof. He did thereby yield a further instance of condescension, a final submission to the law of human nature, in being brought to the dust, and returning to the ground, according to the general
Gen. iii. 19. doom pronounced once upon mankind: *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.* He represented
1 Cor. xv. 20. thereby, as the firstfruits from the dead, and the pattern of his followers, the common manner how,
John v. 28. and whence we shall arise, when the time comes, that all which are in the graves shall hear his voice and go forth, as it is in the Gospel: how all men being as it were sown in the ground, shall spring up again to another life. He did also thereby signify that mystical sepulture, which we undergo in
Rom. vi. 4. in Baptism, being therein buried with him, (as St Paul speaks,) being secluded from the pleasures of sin, and having the vanities of the world removed from our eyes: the immersion in Baptism was a kind of burial, and its being done thrice, according to primitive use, corresponded, as the ancients suppose, to our Saviour's lying three days in the grave: Τὸ γὰρ καταδύσαι τὸ παιδίον ἐν τῇ κολυμβήθρᾳ τρίτον, καὶ ἀναστήσαι, τοῦτο δηλοῖ τὸν θάνατον, καὶ τὴν τριήμερον ἀνάστασιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ: *That the child doth enter thrice into the font, and rises up again; this*

[x] Καὶ δώσω τοὺς πονηροὺς ἀντὶ τῆς ταφῆς αὐτοῦ.—LXX.

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represents the death and resurrection after three days of Christ, saith Athanasius[z]: and, *Illa tertio repetita demersio typum Dominicæ exprimit sepulturæ, per quam Christo consepulti estis in Baptismo: That demersion thrice repeated expresses a type of our Lord's burial, as by which we are together buried with Christ in Baptism,* saith St Augustine. It also doth countenance and commend unto us those seemly respects[a] (those offices of humanity) which all civil people have consented to perform towards the bodies of our brethren departed from us; in decently laying up their remainders; securing them from offence and disgrace; shewing by our best regard to what is left of them, the good will we bare them living, the good hope we have of them dead; as expecting to recover that *depositum* so carefully laid up by us. We see our Saviour was not unconcerned herein; and did commend to the everlasting esteem of posterity the pious respect of that good woman, who spent the precious ointment upon him, as having reserved it for his burial. As for the manner of our Saviour's burial, that his body was, by Pilate's grant upon the petition of an honourable counsellor, rescued from the cross (where, according to the rigour of the Roman law, it was to abide till its consumption), that no further ignominy or injury should be offered unto him, after he had fully satisfied the

John xii. 7.

Matt. xxvi. 57, &c.

[z] [Quæst. in Script. XCII. inter spuria Opera S. Athan. Tom. II. p. 327 E.]

[a] Πάτροκλον κλαίωμεν· ὁ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων.—Hom. [Il. XXII. 9.]

Corpora terræ
Mandemus; qui solus honos Acheronte sub imo est.
[Virg. Æn. XI. 22.]

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will and justice of God, in undergoing such extremities of pain and disgrace for our redemption; that another good ruler, well affected to his person and doctrine, had prepared and did bring a plentiful and precious mixture of spices, wherewith (according to the manner of the Jews towards persons of wealth and respect,) for decency and convenience, (to preserve the dead bodies from noisome savour and to prevent sudden corruption,) to anoint his body: that his body was wrapped up in fine linen clothes, and laid in a new fair tomb, hewed out of a rock, (or stony ground,) was therein enclosed, a great stone being rolled upon the entrance thereof; (God thus ordering it, that all befitting honour should be done to that sacred body, which had borne so much for us, and served God so well; that the glorious temple of the divinity should not be profaned or polluted in any manner unseemly; that the grand miracle of raising our Saviour should come off with most advantage:) these things, plainly described in the Gospel, might afford matter of profitable observation and discourse; but I cannot well insist upon them; but proceed.

John xix. 39, 40.

He descended into hell. This article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones, public or private, excepting that of Aquileia, into which also, perhaps, it might have been inserted not long before Ruffinus's time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the Fathers, and afterwards among the Schoolmen, and lately among modern Divines) been much debated,

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having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses; to recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to achieve. Wherefore, (both upon these accounts, and because I rather choose to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence;) I should be willing altogether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject; yet, however, somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducible to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now whereas there may be a threefold inquiry, one concerning the meaning of these words, *He descended into hell*, intended by those who inserted them; another concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; a third concerning the meaning, they are in consistency with truth capable of;

I. The first I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend; since,

1 It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the Scriptures, and commend them to

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the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages therein: and since,

2 Perhaps, they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation, (like that of the Millennium, and the necessity of infants communicating, &c., which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded.) And since,

3 To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were, (for that doth not appear,) could not be such as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they, perhaps, were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But farther,

4 Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm that our Saviour's soul did, by a true and proper kind of motion, descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained; for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which, it is probable, they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

II. As to the second inquiry, concerning the signification of the words: what may be meant by *He descending;* whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body called *He* by synecdoche: what by *descended;* whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the

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purpose; whether, I say,) by descending may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *Hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; and each of these senses are embraced and contended for: I shall not examine any of them, nor farther meddle in the matter than by saying,

1 That the Hebrew word *Sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *Hell*, or *Hades*, in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently, (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use,) to design the whole region protended downward from the surface of the earth, to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems, anciently over the world) indefinite and inconceivable[b]; vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate and dungeon-like in quality, (whence it is also frequently styled *The pit, The lowest pit, The abyss, The depths of the earth, The darkness, The depths of hell.*) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this

Isai. xxxviii. 18. Ps. lxxxviii. 6. Ecclus. xxi. 11. Ps. lxxi. 20.

[b] Nobis inferi—in fossa terræ et in alto vastitas, et in ipsis visceribus ejus abstrusa profunditas.—Tertull. de Anim. cap. LV. [Opp. p. 303 D.]

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Rom. x. 7. Job xvii. 13. Ps. cxliii. 3. Eccl. vi. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Prov. ix. 18. Job xi. 8. Amos ix. 2. Ps. cxxxix. 8. Deut. xxxii. 22. Isai. lvii. 9.

Sheol (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to heaven, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when Job, speaking of the unsearchableness of the Divine perfections, saith: *It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know?* and the prophet Amos: *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*

2 I say farther, because the bodies, or visible remainders, of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave and receptacle of them, therefore to die is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾅδου, or κατάγεσθαι εἰς ᾅδου, *to descend,* or *to be brought down into* this *hell;* which happening to all men without exception, (for as the Psalmist says, *There is no man that shall deliver his soul,* (or his life, or himself) *from the hand of* this all-grasping *hell,*) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, to good and bad alike; *I will go down,* saith good Jacob, *unto the grave unto my son mourning* (καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾅδου, LXX. *I will go down to Sheol,* this common grave of mankind), and so frequently of others. Whence this hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and signify equivalently with death itself; and it is once by the LXX. so translated[c], (and St Peter[d] seems to use the phrase after them;) for death I say, or for the law,

Ps. lxxxix. 48. Gen. xxxvii. 35; xliv. 29, 31.

[c] Ὠδῖνες θανάτου ἐκύκλωσάν με. *The sorrows of hell compassed me about.*—2 Sam. xxii. 6.

[d] Ὃν ὁ Θεὸς ἀνέστησε, λύσας τὰς ὠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου.—Acts ii. 24.

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condition, and state of death: as in that of Hezekiah in the prophet Isaiah, *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth:* where οἱ ἐν ᾅδου, and οἱ ἀποθανόντες (as the Greek renders *Sheol*, and *death*,) are the same, and opposed to the living, of whom it is said; *The living, the living he shall praise thee.* Isai. xxxviii. 18. Ecclus. xlviii. 5.

3 I say, farther, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place, whither men's souls do go, or where they abide; for that,

(1) It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher speaks, they returned unto God who gave them; and that they did abide in God's hand; especially the souls of the just, according to that in the book of Wisdom; *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.* And for that, Eccl. xii. 7. Wisd. iii. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 3.

(2) It seems they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward; as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God, to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice: and by Enoch's being taken to God, (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above,) and by Elias's translation up into heaven (as it is in the text of the history,) it is probable, they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than Eccl. iii. 21. Gen. v. 24. 2 Kings ii. 11.

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to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those μυχοὶ ᾅδου, (*Closets of hell,*) as the book of Wisdom calls them; that βόθρος ᾅδου (*Deep pit of hell*) as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but some whither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.

Wisd. xvii. 14. Ecclus. xxi. 10. Heb. ix. 8; xi. 16; xii. 22.

(3) I add, that if those ancients had by *Sheol* meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave* (*Sheol*) *cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth;* so Hezekiah spake; *In death there is no remembrance of thee, in Sheol who shall give thee thanks?* so David said; and, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest;* so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by *Sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks in the same manner: ὑψίστῳ τίς αἰνέσει ἐν ᾅδου: *Who shall praise the most high in hell, instead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not; the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.*

Isai. xxxviii. 18. Ps. vi. 5. Eccl. ix. 10. Ecclus. xvii. 27, 28.

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word ᾅδης was assumed by the Jews to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain for their evil lives here. Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the

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New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the Parable of the rich man, who being ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ in hell and torments, did thence lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *Sheol;* especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetical days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his Apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth. Luke xvi. 23.

III. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense, in general, of this principal word in the proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1 If we do interpret the descent into hell here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosom of that universal grave we before spake of; or if (in a notion little differing from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in the manner forementioned,) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of Jacob and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the proposition so understood being most certainly true: we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first and best (if not the only) reason of this proposition being commended to our belief. For that place in the Acts which seems

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to have been the occasion, and the main ground of this proposition being asserted in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously admits this interpretation: for our Saviour's soul not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption, is plainly by St
Acts ii. 31; Peter himself interpreted of his resurrection; *David* (saith he) *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's resur-*
xiii. 34; *rection:* and, in like manner, by St Paul; *As concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, &c.:* that speech, I say, our Saviour's soul not being left in hell, and, not seeing corruption, is by the Apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had underwent corruption; and it is opposed unto David's continuing in death, and seeing corruption; his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave; the Apostles not designing to assert or prove more than our Lord's resurrection: David, argue they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state; David remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust
ii. 29. saw corruption; ἐτελεύτησε, καὶ ἐτάφη, *He died and was buried,* without any reversion: therefore that speech of his in the Psalm must not fully and ultimately be understood of him to whom they did not so exactly agree; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep; whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, τὴν ψυχήν μου, *my soul,* or *my life;* nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition; for (to omit that bolder exposition of

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Beza[e], who sometimes did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro,*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh and for the soul (each of them synecdochically,) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued with life: *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*; and, *That soul shall be cut off*, are terms equivalent in the Law; *The soul that eateth, The soul that toucheth*, and the like phrases, do often occur; and those expressions, *To deliver their soul from death; God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell;* which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.

Exod. xxxi. 14. Lev. vii. 25, 27; v. 2, &c.

Ps. xxxiii. 19; xlix. 15; lxxxix. 48.

Again, taking soul for the living soul, or that faculty by which we live, and hell for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,* will have this natural exposition, agreeable to the Apostles' design: thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh be corrupted[f]. It is also observable, that St Paul, in the 13th of the Acts, neglecting the former part, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell,* contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy*

[e] [Itaque in priore nostra editione recte interpretatus eram, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro,* quod tamen nunc mutavi, ut iis obsequar qui conquesti sunt me a Græcis verbis discessisse, et nomine *cadaveris* (inscitia certe potius Latini sermonis quam recto ullo judicio) offenduntur.—p. 416. Ed. Tert. 1582.]

[f] Dr. H. Pr. C.—[Hammond's Pract. Catech. Book IV. sec. II. Works, Vol. I. p. 104.]

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One to see corruption, intimating both parts to signify the same thing.

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the Creed, that, admitting it, they signify no more than what was before expressed in plain words, *Dead and buried;* and so contain only a needless repetition; I answer,

(1) That this objection concerns them, who inserted the words here, who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible, that our Saviour's being ἐν ᾅδου, according to St Peter, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who also might, perhaps, intend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing;

(2) That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus understanding the descent doth not render it altogether superfluous.

(3) That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so, reflecting upon the more ancient compilers both of this and other breviaries of faith, as the Nicene, and Constantinopolitan Councils, Irenæus, Tertullian, &c., who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material, and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendered than that of their juniors and followers unknown to us; and so much the more, for that in a matter of this kind, defect or omission is less toler-

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able, than any redundance in expression. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to St Paul himself; who in the 15th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial and resurrection; *I delivered unto you first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day;* which enumeration of his, we may it seems well acquiesce in, as sufficient and complete; and may thence with great probability infer, that no other descent of our Saviour into hell, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his catechetical discourses and preachings, as a point of faith; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say, farther, to the main question, that, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

2 Interpreting hell for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence[5] (to omit that *Sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the Old Testament, and consequently thence the place in the Acts applied out of the Psalms, would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion itself, taken according to this sense, were removed; waving, I say, that consideration, and taking ᾅδης according to the meaning, which we must confess it some-

[5] Εἰς ὃ πάντες οἴονται καθάπερ δοχεῖον ἐνθένδε τὰς ψυχὰς μετανίστασθαι.—Greg. Nyss. [De An. et Resurrect. Dial. Opp. Tom. II. p. 641 D.]

Οὐδὲ ἄλλο τί μοι δοκεῖ παρά τε τῶν ἔξωθεν, καὶ παρὰ τῆς θείας γραφῆς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο διασημαίνειν ἐν ᾧ τὰς ψυχὰς γίνεσθαι λέγουσι, πλὴν εἰς τὸ δειδὲς καὶ ἀφανὲς μετέχουσιν.—[Id. Ibid. p. 642 A.]

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time to bear in the New Testament, yet) there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon. For then we must either take it for the place of damned spirits shut up in torment or despair, (according to which acception the proposition itself would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into Paradise; *This day,* said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in Paradise;*) or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed, as bad and miserable; (for that it, in the New Testament at least, comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.) But I think that St Augustine[h] had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the New Testament, that *Hades,* relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least; whereas it is said in the Revelation, that those two inseparable companions, *Death and Hades,* (that *Hades* which is said to render up its dead to judgment,) *were cast into the lake of fire,* it is hard to suppose that Paradise was cast in there; yea, hard it were to say, that *Hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then, in its usual latitude

Luke xxiii. 43.

Rev. xx. 14.

[h] [Quanquam et illud me nondum invenisse confiteor, *in feros* appellatos, ubi justorum animæ requiescunt.—Neque enim Abraham, vel ille pauper in sinu ejus, hoc est, in secreto quietis ejus, in doloribus erat, inter quorum requiem et illa inferni tormenta legimus magnum chaos (chasma) firmatum: sed nec apud inferos esse dicti sunt. *Contigit* enim, inquit, *mori inopem illum, et auferri ab Angelis in sinum Abrahæ: mortuus est autem et dives, et sepultus est: et cum apud inferos in tormentis esset.* Videmus itaque inferorum mentionem non esse factum in requie pauperis, sed in supplicio divitis.—De Gen. ad Lit. XII. § 63. Opp. Tom. III. p. I. col. 320 G.]

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of signification (as Christians understood it), comprehend Paradise. Yea farther, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose Paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that Paradise, which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in St Paul, or confining thereto: it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent that Paradise (that *Locus divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatus*[i]; *The place of divine comfort and amenity, destinated to receive the spirits of the saints*) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth[k]; no commodious situation it seems for a garden, for delightsome walks and bowers: yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto. The word descend, taking hell for the ancient *Sheol* forementioned, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentic use, and the nature of the thing; but taking hell in this sense (for the place of souls) it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground, or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of hell. However,

2 Cor. xii. 2.

3 I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their

[i] [Tertull. Apol. cap. XLVII. Opp. p. 37 C.]

[k] Οὔτε γὰρ ἐν ὑποχθονίοις εἴποι τις ἂν τὸν παράδεισον, οὔτε ἐν παραδείσῳ τὰ ὑποχθόνια, &c.—[Greg. Nyss. In Resurr. Christ. Orat. I. Opp. Tom. II. p. 823 D.]

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recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take hell in a general and common sense for the place or state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto, (by a falling as it were from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body; and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body, being accommodated to the soul) if, I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's descent into hell, for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear it, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed, and serving to the further establishment of those great articles adjoining, our Lord's death and resurrection; it implying the perfect accomplishment of death for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that ἀδύνατον ᾅδην, (as the book of Wisdom calls it,) that invisible region, so far distant hence, whence—*Revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,* is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected but by the power of Him, whose prerogative it is *To kill and make alive; To bring down to hell, and to bring up; To lead unto the gates of hell, and to bring back again.*

Wisd. xvii. 14.

1 Sam. ii. 6. Deut. xxxii. 39. Tobit xiii. 2. Wisd. xvi. 13.

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pain to consider, or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why, and to what effect our Saviour descended into hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert, and redeem from thence all, or some of

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the damned souls[1] (for some say, that he depopulated and emptied that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that which hath very weak, or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.)

[1] Iren. Lib. IV. cap. 45. [Et propter hoc Dominum in ea, quæ sunt sub terra, descendisse, evangelizantem et illis adventum suum; remissione peccatorum exsistente his qui credunt in eum. p. 264.] Lib. V. cap. 31. [Nunc autem tribus diebus conversatus est ubi erant mortui, quemadmodum Propheta ait de eo: *Commemoratus est Dominus sanctorum mortuorum suorum, eorum qui ante dormierunt in terra sepelitionis, et descendit ad eos, extrahere eos, et salvare eos.*—Cum enim Dominus *in medio umbræ mortis abierit*, ubi animæ mortuorum erant, post deinde corporaliter resurrexit, et post resurrectionem assumptus est: manifestum est quia et discipulorum ejus, propter quos et hæc operatus est Dominus, animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum, definitum eis a Deo, et ibi usque ad resurrectionem commorabuntur, sustinentes resurrectionem.—pp. 330, 331.]

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. Lib. I. cap. 13. [Πῶς *ἐσταυρώθη, καὶ κατέβη εἰς τὸν Ἅιδην, καὶ διέσχισε φραγμὸν τὸν ἐξ αἰῶνος μὴ σχισθέντα, καὶ ἀνέστη, καὶ συνήγειρε νεκροὺς τοὺς ἀπ' αἰώνων κεκοιμημένους· καὶ πῶς κατέβη μόνος, ἀνέβη δὲ μετὰ πολλοῦ ὄχλου πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα αὐτοῦ.*]

Euseb. Demonst. Evang. Lib. X. cap. 8. [Ὁ *μὲν γὰρ ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου ψυχῶν παρῆει, ἐκ μακρῶν αἰώνων τὴν ἄφιξιν αὐτοῦ περιμενουσῶν, καὶ κατήειγε θύρας χαλκᾶς συντρίψων, καὶ μοχλοὺς σιδηροῦς συνθλάσων, καὶ τοὺς πρὶν δεσμίους Ἅιδου ἐλευθέρους ἀνήσων.*]

Clemen. Alex. Strom. Lib. II. cap. 9. [Φησὶ (Ποιμὴν) γοῦν, "*Τοὺς ἀποστόλους καὶ διδασκάλους, τοὺς κηρύξαντας τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ κοιμηθέντας, τῇ δυνάμει καὶ τῇ πίστει κηρύξαι τοῖς προκεκοιμημένοις.*"—Opp. Vol. I. p. 452.]

Strom. Lib. VI. cap. 6. [Ἐνεργεῖ *δὲ οἶμαι, καὶ ὁ Σωτὴρ, ἐπεὶ τὸ σώζειν ἔργον αὐτοῦ· ὅπερ οὖν καὶ πεποίηκεν, τοὺς εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεῦσαι βεβουλημένους διὰ τοῦ κηρύγματος, ὅποι ποτ' ἔτυχον γεγονότες, ἑλκύσας εἰς σωτηρίαν. Εἴ γ' οὖν ὁ Κύριος δι' οὐδὲν ἕτερον εἰς Ἅιδου κατῆλθεν, ἢ ἵνα πάντας εὐαγγελίσασθαι, ἢ μόνους Ἑβραίους. Εἰ μὲν οὖν πάντας, σωθήσονται πάντες οἱ πιστεύσαντες, κἂν ἐξ ἐθνῶν ὄντες τύχωσιν, ἐξομολογησάμενοι ἤδη ἐκεῖ.*—Opp. Tom. II. p. 763.]

Athan. con. Apollin. [Πῶς *ἐκεῖ παρὼν ὁ Κύριος ἀσωμάτως, ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐνομίσθη ὑπὸ τοῦ θανατοῦ; ἵνα ψυχαῖς ταῖς ἐν δεσμοῖς κατεχομέναις, μορφὴν ἰδίας ψυχῆς ἀνεπιδεκτὸν ὡς δεκτικὴν τῶν δεσμῶν τοῦ θανάτου παραστήσας, παρουσαν παρούσαις, διαῤῥήξῃ τὰ δεσμὰ ψυχῶν τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου κατεχομένων.*—Lib. I. § 14. Opp. p. 933 D.]

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That he went to rescue and conduct into glory the souls of the patriarchs, and other good persons from that infernal *limbus*, in which till then they were detained; (a place by no likely means to be proved existent otherwhere than in the fancy of its inventors;) or that he went to deliver the souls of the just, and Prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen (as Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Tryphon[m]).

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrify the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions[n].

These, and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced by saying, the Scriptures nowhere plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon; (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places in the first Epistle of St Peter, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them;) whereas in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them, who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress, and a translation into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all

Heb. ii. 14. Col. ii. 15.

[m] [§ 105. *Φαίνεται δὲ καὶ ὅτι πᾶσαι αἱ ψυχαὶ τῶν οὕτως δικαίων καὶ προφητῶν ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν ἔπιπτον τῶν τοιούτων δυνάμεων, ὁποῖα δὴ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐγγαστριμύθῳ ἐκείνῃ ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ὁμολογεῖται.*—Opp. p. 200 c.]

[n] Vid. Montac. Orig. Eccles. Part. Post. p. 442. [Imprimis illam causam descensus admittendam censeo, ut cursum victoriæ suæ contra mortem, Inferni archistrategum persecutus consummaret, Infernum ipsum metropolin, et *ὁρμητήριον* mortis et maledictionis expugnaret.]—Et in Appar. 1. ad Orig. Eccles. [p. 29.]

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the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross; in these things the Scripture is very clear and copious: but concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or prisons[o] (as they call them), that local triumph in the devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them; whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us: for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them[p]; nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed and encouraged. So that we may, however, safely be ignorant in regard to any of those notions. But let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about this endless question; except we will end it with that saying of St Augustine; *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis*[q]: or with that more peremptory saying of Calvin[r]: *Atqui stultum et temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inquirere, quam Deus nobis scire permittat.*

[o] Bellarm. [De Anim. Christ. cap. 12, &c.]

[p] Vid. Fidei Symbola in Codice Justin. Cod. I. [Tit. I.]

[q] De Gen. ad Lit. VIII. 5. [Opp. Tom. III. p. i. col. 229 C.]

[r] Calv. Inst. III. 25. 6.

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The third day he rose again from the dead.

This Article is one of the principal Articles in its nature, its design, its consequence; the faith of which was intended as a means to produce faith in the rest; removing the doubts and difficulties that might obstruct it; for by our Saviour's resurrection the truth of all his pretences concerning his person, his office, his doctrine, were to the highest degree of satisfaction and conviction assured; no miracle could be greater in itself, (more signifying the power of God therein employed;) none more proper for production and confirmation of the faith required of us concerning the dignity of his person, the efficacy of his performances, the validity of his promises, the reality of his doctrine in relation to the future state. God, as St Paul tells us, did πίστιν παρέχειν πᾶσιν, afford to all a most persuasive and convincing argument of all truth concerning our Saviour, raising him from the dead.

Acts xvii. 31.

1 If the meanness of his birth and parentage; the low garb and small lustre of his life; the bitter sorrows and shameful disgraces of his death, though accompanied with such excellent qualities, and such wonderful performances, as did appear in and were done by him, might (especially in those that stand at distance) breed any suspicion (as, indeed, they have afforded matter of argument to the adversaries of Christianity against it) concerning our Saviour, whether he were, indeed, as he pretended, the Son of God, so near in nature, in favour, in affection to God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, the Lord of all things,

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the Judge of the world; if, I say, such homely circumstances that attended his person, such sad accidents that befel him, may in the eyes of those who cast only superficial glances on the thing, and look not beyond outward appearances, beget doubtful apprehensions concerning our Saviour's person, or somewhat depress him in their conceit; the wonderful power and special favour of God toward him demonstrated in his resurrection, will discuss those mists, and raise him in their esteem; *For though,* as St Paul speaks, *he was crucified out of weakness,* (that is, therein the infirmity of our nature being discovered,) *yet he liveth by the power of God;* by his recovering life, his divine power is declared; it was ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως, *An excessive greatness of power,* which God exerted; ἐνέργεια τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος, *An activity of the might of strength,* or *of most mighty strength,* which he set on work in the raising of Christ from the dead; (so the Apostle labours to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle.) Pliny[a], I remember, among instances of things which were impossible even to God himself, reckons these two; *Mortales æternitate donare, et revocare defunctos,* (*To bestow eternity upon mortals,* and *To recall the dead to life;*) both which suppositions we see by our Saviour's resurrection clearly confuted, yet so as the making them argues how high and hard a work in human conceit it was to effect it. Indeed, St Paul seems to suppose otherwise, when he thus puts the question; *What? doth it seem incredible to you that God should raise the dead?* But there is an

Rom. i. 4. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Eph. i. 19, 20. Acts xxvi. 8.

[a] Hist. Nat. II. 7.

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emphasis in the words παρ' ὑμῖν, *with you;* with you, whose minds were prepossessed with notions favourable to this doctrine; who had so many instances thereof; who had been instructed to hope future rewards from God. And as it was an instance of God's mighty power, so was it no less a mark of his special favour toward our Saviour: as to take away life signifies extremity of displeasure, so to restore it implies the highest degree of favour. Death in itself imports a total incapacity and deprivation of good, and is used to express the worst state of being, or utmost misery, consequent upon man's disobedience and God's displeasure: and life, as it is really in its own nature the foundation of perceiving good, so it represents and expresses all the happiness of which we are capable, all the reward promised to obedience: wherefore God raising our Saviour to life, declared thereby his especial love and favour to him, his full approbation and acceptance of him: if yielding him to death might seem to argue God's displeasure toward, or disregard of him; raising him to life doth much more demonstrate a tender affection, an extraordinary care for and respect to him: that might be supposed to proceed upon other grounds; this can receive no other interpretation. To give life is the ground of that relation which is the highest in nature, and speaks most affection; wherefore, in Scripture language, to raise up, is termed to beget; and this regeneration is put for the resurrection; and our Saviour, in the mystical speech of the Psalmist, expounded by St Paul, is said that day to be begot, when he was raised by God; so that it being a paternal act doth signify a

Acts xiii. 33.

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paternal regard: whence St Paul further saith, *Our Saviour was declared* (or rather determined and defined) *to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead:* this act of God raising him, not only shewing him to be, but in some sort constituting him, the Son of God. Rom. i. 4.

2 Thus doth our Saviour's resurrection aptly serve to dignify and exalt his person in our esteem: it also may confirm our faith in the efficacy of his performances for us: we need not doubt, considering this, of the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our persons, the sanctification of our hearts, the salvation of our souls, (we, which is always to be supposed and understood, performing the conditions required of us;) I say, the pardon of our sins, and acceptance of our persons; for as *He was delivered for our offences,* so *he was raised again for our justification;* that is, we are thereby assured of our acquittance from sin, and restitution to God's favour; and perhaps somewhat more; our pardon and acceptance seems not only declared, but also consigned and delivered up unto us by our Saviour's resurrection: as we were punished in his suffering, so in his resurrection we were restored; Christ merited our justification by his passion, but God gave it us in his resurrection; being that formal act of grace whereby he was (after having undergone the effects of Divine displeasure) apparently reinstated in God's favour, and we virtually in him; *Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again:* since God hath acknowledged satisfaction done to his justice, by Rom. iv. 25. Rom. viii. 33, 34.

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discharging our surety from prison, and all further prosecution; since he hath in a manner so notorious and signal demonstrated his favour to our proxy, there can be no further pretence against us, no fear of any displeasure remaining: in our Baptism was represented, as the burial of Christ, (we being there in shew and mystery buried with him,) so his resurrection also, in virtue of which we then received the benefits corresponding to that representation; *Being buried with Christ in Baptism,* saith St Paul, *in him also we were raised again—and us, being dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of our flesh, he quickened together with him, forgiving us all our sins:* and *συνεζωοποίησε, συνήγειρε, συνεκάθισε,—He co-quickened, co-raised,* and *co-seated us* (if I may so speak) *with him in heavenly places.*

Col. ii. 12, 13.

Eph. ii. 5, 6.

3 We may also hence with good reason hope for aid sufficient to sanctify our hearts and lives: that he which raised our Saviour from a natural death, both can and will raise us from spiritual death, from that mortal slumber in sins and trespasses, in which we lie buried naturally, to walk in that newness of life, and heavenly conversation, to which the Gospel calls us, and the Divine Spirit excites us; which is that first resurrection, which blessed and holy is he that hath a part in; on such the second death shall have no power: for also, consequently, our Saviour's resurrection assures to us the salvation of our souls; for by it, as St Peter tells us, *God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath regenerated us unto a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for us in the heavens:* and, *If, when we were enemies, we were*

Rev. xx. 6.

1 Pet. i. 3.

Rom. v. 10.

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reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Thus may our Saviour's resurrection confirm our faith concerning the efficacy of his performances for us.

4 It was also a most strong and proper argument to demonstrate the validity of his promises, and the truth of his doctrine concerning the future state; (a matter most important, and a fundamental ingredient of all Religion;) an argument most strong, I say, as demonstrating by palpable instance the possibility of what he promised and taught, exemplifying in himself, what he bade others to expect, that by Divine power they should be raised to life: by his doctrine *He brought life and immortality to light,* (a point so much doubted and disputed of before; so little seen in the darkness of natural reason, so clouded in the uncertainties of common tradition;) but by his resurrection he proved that light to be true and certain; *He thereby,* as St Paul expresses it, *by the resurrection from the dead, did* most effectually, φῶς καταγγέλλειν, *denounce and declare light to the people, and to the nations,* (to all men, both Jews and Gentiles.) Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory are all the arguments, which the subtlest speculation could ever produce, to assert the distinction from the body, the separate existence, the continuance of man's soul after death; the providence and justice of God over men here; the dispensations of reward and punishment hereafter, (those great incentives to virtue, and discouragements from vice,) in comparison of this one sensible experience, attesting to and confirming

2 Tim. i. 10.

Acts xxvi. 23.

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1 Pet. i. 3, 4. that doctrine which contains those great things; and for the same reason a most proper argument: for though any miracle (plainly and convincingly so) may suffice to confirm any point of doctrine; yet a miracle in the same kind, about the same matter, is more immediately pertinent and efficacious to that purpose. By curing the sick, our Saviour proved that he could remit sins; and that he was Lord of the Sabbath; having authority to dispense with the rigorous observation of positive laws; and in like manner all the miracles he did were in their nature apt to prove the truth of whatever he taught; *These were writ,* saith St John, *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;* yet so as to beget persuasion by discourse interceding, and by virtue of a parity in reason: but our Saviour's resurrection did prove the possibility of ours (with all that coheres or is consequent thereto) directly and immediately, with all evidence possible to sense itself: we cannot, considering this, have any pretence to doubt of what he and his apostles have taught us; that he preceding as *The firstborn from the dead,* as *The firstfruits of them that sleep,* as *The captain of life,* as our *Forerunner* and pattern, we ἐν ἰδίῳ τάγματι, in our due rank and season, as younger sons of the resurrection, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and imitation of him, shall follow: so that, *If the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead doth dwell in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us:* that *If we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also*

John xx. 31.

Rev. i. 5. Col. i. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. Acts iii. 15; v. 31. Heb. vi. 20. Luke xx. 36.

Rom. viii. 11.

Rom. vi. 5.

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(planted) *in the likeness of his resurrection:* that *As in Adam we died, so in Christ we shall revive; As we have borne the image of the earthly man, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly:* that *He who raised our Lord shall raise us by his power:* *Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus shall also raise us by Jesus.* Thus is the resurrection of our Saviour able and apt to beget and establish our faith concerning his person, his performances, and his doctrine; and it being in such manner conducible to so high purposes, it was requisite itself should be declared with most clear and full evidence: and that it should be so, God did abundantly provide. I omit the types and mystical representations which did foreshadow it; and the prophetical passages expressing or alluding to it; (having incidentally, upon other occasions bordering on this point, formerly touched upon the principal of them;) and only say, that no matter of fact is capable of surer attestation, than God did order this to have. He did προχειροτονεῖν (predesign, with an especial care pick out and appoint) witnesses for this purpose; persons in all respects, for their number, for their qualifications, for their circumstances most considerable and credible: not one or two, but very many, (five hundred, St Paul tells us, saw him at once;) not strangers, but persons most familiarly acquainted with him, (who were with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him, for three years' space, from his Baptism to his Ascension;) not upon relation, or at a distance, but by immediate sense and converse with him, (*Who did,* as St Peter, one of them, tells us, *eat and drink with him after that*

1 Cor. xv. 22, 49. 1 Cor. vi. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 14. Vid. 1 Thess. iv. 14. Vid. Acts xvii. 3. Luke xxiv. 46. Acts x. 41. 1 Cor. xv. 6. John xv. 27. Acts i. 21, 22. Acts x. 41.

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he rose from the dead;) not from a single, transient experience, but by frequent conversation for a good continuance of time; ἐπὶ πλείους ἡμέρας, *for many days together; To whom,* saith St Luke, *he presented himself living after he had suffered by many certain tokens, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God;* persons of unquestionable discretion and honesty, who preached sincerity to others, (with effectual persuasion,) and in other things irreprovably practised it; who could have no imaginable design in testifying it, beside the discharge of their conscience in God's sight; as encountering thereby the most terrible oppositions and difficulties; incurring most certain and most grievous dangers, troubles, and sufferings; without any possible benefit (of worldly profit, honour, or pleasure) accruing thence to themselves; without any comfort or support, except the reward they might hope for from God for the performance of so difficult and troublesome a duty: in fine, by persons whose testimony God himself ratified by extraordinary graces (invincible courage, constancy, patience, self-denial, meekness, and charity) conferred on them; by miraculous works openly and frequently performed by them; so that *They did* effectually *with great power yield their testimony concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them,* (great appearance of the Divine favour towards them, of Divine goodness in them,) as we have it, Acts iv. 33. It was the principal part of their office (of the highest apostolical office) to testify this truth; as we see in the choice of Matthias, where it is said, *Wherefore of these men which have companied*

Acts xiii. 31.

Acts i. 3.

Acts i. 21, 22.

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with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And beyond the providing witnesses so qualified, testimonies so credible, what could God himself do necessary to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, (unreasonably and unworthily incredulous;) what means, I say, could further be required, to beget and confirm our faith in the matter of our Saviour's resurrection, and consequently of all doctrines taught by him and his disciples, which by this most signal miracle are so perfectly asserted and proved?

Now the great end and use of our Saviour's resurrection being thus declared, I shall not insist upon explaining the nature thereof, (it being clear that his death consisting in the separation of soul and body, each departing to its place, his resurrection, opposed thereto and restoring him into the same state, must consist in resuscitating, reducing, and reuniting them together, so as to recover all vital faculties, and exercise vital operations;) nor in considering the causes efficient thereof, (which it is certain could be no other than that Divinity common to the three Persons individed in nature, power, and operation;) whence it is attributed, as most commonly to God, so peculiarly sometimes to the glory and power of the Father, who in order of nature and in all common operations doth precede; sometimes to the Son, who laid down his life, and took it up again; who demolished the temple of his own body, and reared it up again; sometimes to the Holy Ghost, by

Rom. vi. 4.

John x. 17, 18; ii. 19.

Rom. i. 4; viii. 11.

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Matt. xii. 28. which, as he did cast out devils, and performed other his great works, so he did this grand miracle: which dwelling in him, did quicken his mortal body, as is intimated and by consequence arises Rom. viii. 11. from the place forecited. Upon these things, as also upon the manner and circumstances of our Saviour's resurrection, I shall not insist, having not leisure sufficient to consider and prosecute all, but only to touch those things which seem most material and useful.

Yet must I not altogether pass over the circumstance of time, (because mentioned here,) *Upon the third day.* This is added, as it is commonly in Scripture when mention is made of our Saviour's resurrection, according to the common manner of speech, in which, when we relate any story or matter of fact, we are wont to adjoin the circumstances, (of time most commonly, many times of place, and sometimes of other respects and adjuncts,) as signs and arguments of the things certainly, and our assurance in affirming it. Fictions usually go naked of circumstances, nor can the relaters of them tell when or where or how the matter of them did exist; but when we are punctual in circumstance, it signifies we are serious and confident, and grounded in the thing itself. As for this circumstance itself, that which is most remarkable therein seems to be the wisdom of God choosing a convenient distance of time, after our Saviour's death, for his resurrection; he stayed so long, that it might be thoroughly certain our Saviour was really dead, beyond all possibility of recovery by natural means; (all natural heat being necessarily extinguished by that durance in the

Acts x. 40. 1 Cor. xv. 4.

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grave, although he had been taken down with some undiscernible remainders thereof from the cross;) he deferred it no longer, both because there was no reason for doing so, and because it was fit, that while men's memories were fresh, their passions warm, their fancies busy, their mouths open in discourse concerning his death; while the designed witnesses were present, (both enemies watching and friends attending the event,) it was, I say, then most fitting that our Saviour should arise. As for the meaning of the word, *third*, (whether it be to be taken inclusively in respect to the day of our Saviour's passion, or so as to exclude it,) with the reconciling of some Scriptures seeming dissonant in the point, I refer you for satisfaction to commentators upon the Gospel; the question not belonging to the substance of our faith, nor having any very considerable influence (that I see) upon practice. I proceed therefore.

He ascended into Heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.

After our Lord had (after his resurrection) consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth for the confirmation of our faith, and constitution of his Church; having a competent time conversed with his disciples, establishing their faith, enlightening their minds in the knowledge of truth and understanding of the Scriptures; inflaming their affections, comforting their hearts against ensuing tribulations, all oppositions of earth, and hell, for his sake; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in their

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instructing, converting, and reconciling the world to the faith and obedience of his law; furnishing them with commission and authority to testify his truth, to dispense the tenders of grace and pardon procured by him, to collect and build up that Church, which he had purchased by his blood; lastly imparting his effectual benediction to them; having, I say, done these things, (which St Luke expresses altogether by the words ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς, that is, having given all necessary instructions, and laid fitting commands upon them,) he was in their presence taken, carried up, (ἀνελήφθη, ἀνεφέρετο,) and ascended into heaven; he, that is, he according to his humanity, his body and soul were by the Divine power translated into heaven: into heaven; what is meant by that (in the utmost extent, according to the truth of the thing) appears by other phrases equivalent, by which this action is expressed; ascending to the Father; that is, to the place of God's more especial presence and residence; where ἐμφανίζεται τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ, *He appears to the face of God;* being exalted to the right hand of God, (that is, to the place of highest eminency, and of greatest proximity to God;) entering εἰς τὰ ἅγια, (into those most holy places, that ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος, those intimate recesses of inaccessible and incommunicable glory;) being assumed and entering into glory; passing through the heavens, (that is, all places above, inferior to the highest pitch of glory;) ascending ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, above, beyond all heavens; becoming ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν, (more sublime than, advanced above, the heavens;) by which appears, that the utmost

Acts i. 2.

Luke xxiv. 51.

John xiii. 1; xx. 17. Phil. ii. 9. Eph. i. 20. Heb. ix. 24. Acts ii. 33; v. 31; vii. 56. Heb. ix. 12. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Luke xxiv. 26. Heb. vi. 19.

Heb. iv. 14.

Eph. iv. 10. Heb. vii. 26.

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term of our Saviour's ascent was that place of all in situation most high, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most august; the inmost sanctuary of God's temple above, not made with hands; the most special presence-chamber in those heavenly courts. Thither did our Saviour ascend; and there (as it follows here) *He sitteth at God's right hand;* for the ends and uses of these two, (one whereof is only the way or tendency unto the other,) conspiring or being coincident, I shall join the consideration of them together. The meaning of which words it is not hard to find out, it being obvious that the state of things above is in Scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is apt most to beget in us reverence towards God, and which really doth most resemble it; the state of a king here, sitting upon his throne; personages of highest rank and respect, his nearest relations, his most beloved favourites, the chief ministers and officers of his crown attending upon him, and surrounding his throne; so yet that for distinction, some place, more eminent and honourable than the rest, is assigned to him, toward whom the King intends to declare especial regard and favour; which place (by customs grounded upon reasons plain enough, the opportunity of nearness for all kind of conversation and address; and the right hand's advantage for strength and activity, acquired by use, and consequently also its aptitude to give or take) hath been determined to be the next place at the right hand; as we see, for instance, when Bathsheba came to Solomon, it is said, *The king— sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set* 1 Kings ii. 19.

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for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand: thus our Saviour being raised by God to the supreme pitch of honour, of power, of favour with him, having advanced him to be a *Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins; Having superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, under the earth must bow; Having seated him in heavenly places, above all principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and name* (or *title*) *that is named, both in the present world and that which is to come; Having committed to him all authority in heaven and upon the earth; given all things into his hands; Having made him heir of all things; subjected all things under his feet,* (*angels, authorities, and powers;*) *crowned him with* (sovereign) *glory and honour;* having given him (what that in numerable host of heaven in the Revelation acknowledges him worthy of, *Power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing,* (that is, all good and excellence possible in the highest degree;) God having, I say, conferred these pre-eminences of dignity, power, and favour upon our Saviour, he is said therefore to have seated him at his right hand; *At the right hand of the power,* (as it is in the Gospels; that is, of the Sovereign and Almighty Potentate;) *At the right hand of the Majesty on high;* and *At the right hand of the throne of God,* (as it is in the Apostle to the Hebrews.) So much plainly the whole speech imports; and if there be any peculiar emphasis designed in the word *sitting,* beyond that which is sometimes more simply and generally

Acts v. 31. Phil. ii. 9, 10. Eph. i. 20, 21. Matt. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2. Heb. i. 2; ii. 8, 9. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. v. 12. Eph. i. 20. Matt. xxvi. 64. Mark xiv. 62. Luke xxii. 69. Heb. viii. 1; xii. 2. Rom. viii. 34. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

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said, being at God's right hand; here may be further implied, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of this glorious and happy condition wherein he is instated; as also, it doth augment the main sense, sitting being the most honourable posture; and therefore signifying to the utmost that eminency of favour and respect he hath in God's sight; as also, it may denote further the nature and quality of his preferment; his being constituted to rule and to judge; and therefore expressed as sitting upon a throne of majesty, upon a tribunal of justice.

So much briefly may serve for the explication of these two points: (for as to the words subjoined, *The Father Almighty,* whereof the latter is addititious, and not extant in the more ancient forms of this Creed, having considered them before, treating upon the beginning of the Creed, and particularly having there taken the word *Almighty* in its greatest latitude, so as to include both παντοκράτωρ and παντοδύναμος, passing over the critical distinction made between them; I shall not repeat any thing concerning them.)

Now as to the ends of our Saviour's glorious ascension and abode in heaven, the effects produced thereby, the uses which the belief and consideration thereof may conduce to; the ends and effects thereof, I say, declared in Scripture, are briefly,

1st. That as a Priest and Advocate he might there intercede for us, for the pardon of our sins, for the acceptance of our persons, for the success of our prayers, for the supply of our needs, for

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the collation of all benefits and blessings on us; representing his merits, pleading our cause, presenting our supplications, and interposing his favour and authority in our behalf; *He ever liveth to make intercession for us: He is our High Priest, sitting at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens,* there performing that office for us: *Who shall condemn? It is Christ who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedeth for us* (there:) *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: God exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.* It is by him that we do προσέρχεσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, have our access to God, not only by virtue of his merits, but by his continual act of mediation: it is he, that in the golden censer, at the golden altar before God, offers up the incense of our prayers, consecrated and perfumed by his hand.

Heb. vii. 25; viii. 1.
Rom. viii. 34.
1 John ii. 2.
Acts v. 31.
Heb. vii. 25.
Rev. viii. 3.

2dly. He ascended and resides in heaven, that as a King he might govern us, protect us, save and deliver us from our enemies; that he might subdue and destroy his and our enemies; the enemies of his kingdom and of our salvation; the world, the flesh, the devil, sin, death, and hell; whatever opposes his glory, his truth, his service, and consequently impedes our salvation, either by open violence or fraudulent practice. God did say unto him, *Sit thou at my right hand, till I have made thine enemies thy footstool;* and accordingly, *He must reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet:* no power shall be able to withstand his will and command, who sits at the helm of omnipotent Sovereignty, at that right hand which

Ps. cx. 1.
Acts ii. 34.
Heb. i. 13; x. 13.
1 Cor. xv. 25.

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governs and orders all things. But having before spoken concerning the royal office and lordship of our Saviour, I shall add no more to this purpose.

3dly. Our Saviour tells us himself, that he went to heaven to prepare a place for us; to prepare mansions of joy and bliss in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore. He is our προόδρομος, our *Forerunner* into heaven, that hath disposed things there for our entertainment and reception; it is his will, that where he is, there we should be also; that we might contemplate and partake of his glory. John xiv. 2. Ps. xvi. 11. Heb. vi. 20. John xvii. 24.

4thly. Our Saviour also tells us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, that he might send the Divine Spirit, the power from on high, to enlighten, sanctify, and comfort us; *If I go not away*, saith he, *the Paraclete will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you:* that is, God in his wisdom hath appointed, (for the exaltation of our Saviour's honour,) that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience; the consequence of his triumph; the fruit of his intercession; an ornament of his royal estate; a pledge of his princely munificence: it was reserved as a most royal gift, fit to be given at his coronation; his being inaugurated and invested in sovereign dignity, power, and glory: whence it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet,* (understand, was not yet poured forth and bestowed in that manner and measure, as God did intend to do it hereafter,) *because Jesus was not yet glorified:* it was from Jesus, received into glory, that excellent gift was designed to come, in God's purpose and promise. Add hereto consequently, John xvi. 7. Luke xxiv. 49. John vii. 39.

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5thly. That all good gifts and graces bestowed on the Church in general, and upon every member thereof singly, useful *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's body,* do proceed hence; *To every one of you,* saith St Paul, *is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ:* whence he saith, (the Psalmist saith, prophesying of our Saviour,) *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

Eph. iv. 12; iv. 7, 8, &c. Ps. lxviii. 18.

6thly. I might add, that God thus advanced our Saviour to so high a dignity, to declare the love he bears to piety, righteousness, and obedience, in so highly rewarding and dignifying it; for *Because he was obedient to the death, therefore did God exalt him: For the suffering of death, do we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.* The belief, therefore, and consideration of these truths, will serve (briefly) to nourish and increase our faith, to cherish and strengthen our hope, to excite and inflame our devotion, to direct and elevate our affections, to enforce and engage, to encourage and quicken our obedience.

Phil. ii. 9. Heb. ii. 9.

To nourish, I say, and cherish our faith and hope. If the resurrection of our Saviour did beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of, and a lively hope of the good proceeding from, our Saviour's undertaking and doctrine; his ascension declared by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities must needs nourish, augment, and corroborate them. We cannot distrust any promises made by him; we cannot despair of any good from him, (not of relief, succour, supply in our straits, or in our needs; of comfort in our afflictions; of

1 Pet. i. 3.

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protection in our dangers; of deliverance from our miseries;) from him who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Divine Power; having all things committed to his authority and disposal. It also serves to excite and inflame our devotions: for having such a Mediator in heaven, so near in God's presence, so much in his favour; such a master of requests; so good a friend at court; such a favourite at hand, to present up, to commend, to further our petitions; *We may,* as the Apostle to the Hebrews enjoins us, *come to the throne of grace with all freedom of speech and boldness, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid:* we need not doubt of that promise being fulfilled; *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive:* and what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than the assurance of so good acceptance, of so happy success thereof? The proper influence also of these considerations is to direct and elevate our affections from these inferior, mean, vain, and base things, to the things above; *Seek the things above,* saith St Paul, *where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God:* where Christ our life, our hope, our treasure, our head is, there should our hearts be, thither should our affections tend; there should our πολίτευμα (our business and conversation) be, where the family is to which we relate, and its Master; where the city is, where our final rest and abode should be, (for we are but strangers and pilgrims, and sojourners,) with its Lord and Governor; where our country is, the place of all our estate and concernment, and he resides, which only can make it good to us. It, lastly, doth engage and encourage us to all kind of

Heb. iv. 16.

Matt. xxi. 22. 1 John v. 14.

Col. iii. 1, 4; i. 27.

Phil. iii. 20.

Heb. xiii. 14. Heb. xi. 13.

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obedience, to consider that high reward of eternal glory and happiness which our Saviour hath obtained as a reward of his obedience, and as a pledge of like reward designed to us, if we insist in his footsteps; *Let us run the race that is set before us,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *looking to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus; who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: I covenant to you,* saith our Saviour, *a kingdom, as my Father covenanted me a kingdom:* supposing we obey his commandments, we shall obtain a like excellent and happy estate: as we see God hath performed to him, so will he also make good his word to us; *The word,* saith St Paul, *is faithful and assuredly true: if we have died with him,* (to lust and sin,) *we shall also live with him,* (in joy and glory;) *if we endure,* (in obedience and patience,) *we shall also reign with him.* To which blessed kingdom God in his mercy bring us all, through the grace, merits, and intercession of him, who with God the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth for ever: to whom be all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

Heb. xii. 1, 2.

Luke xxii. 29.

2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

Rom. viii. 17.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

This is the last of those particular characters whereby the grand object of our faith, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour, is described, containing a most eminent office peculiar to him, implying the manner of executing it, and determining the extent thereof: the belief of which is of principal consequence, and in a special manner

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influential upon practice; whether we consider the nature of the office or the quality of the person designed thereto: the office, to judge; the Person, He; Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, he that was born, that died, that performed and suffered so much for us, he shall judge.

Shall judge: There is no consideration, whereof man's mind is capable, more apt to excite men to the performance of duty, to restrain them from offending, and to beget in them a care and conscience of what they do, than this, that they must sometime hereafter certainly be forced to render an account of their actions; that they must undergo a most strict and severe scrutiny; and shall be dealt with according to the result thereof; so as to be approved and rewarded for their good, condemned and punished for their bad lives; a man considering and being persuaded of this, must necessarily accuse himself of extreme folly and madness, if he do not provide for that account, and order his life in respect thereto. This persuasion, I say, is the sharpest spur imaginable to the doing of good, the strongest curb from doing ill, that could be devised; and therefore all nations in some manner have acknowledged it as a fundamental principle of Religion, (men generally, with a ready inclination, have embraced it as so,) that after this life men shall be brought to a just impartial bar, their actions scanned exactly, their persons doomed accordingly to comfort or pain.

And, indeed, setting this apart, all other incentives to virtue, and all avocatives from vice, (which common experience or philosophical speculation do afford us,) seem very blunt and faint; do promise

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small effect: the native beauty and intrinsic worth of virtue, the conveniences flowing from it, the commendation that attends it, its most goodly fruits of health, peace, and tranquillity, comfort and satisfaction of mind; (beside, that they are usually balanced with contrary inconveniences, difficulties, crosses, troubles, and pains;) if they do not extend beyond this transitory life, how can they in reason be very considerable and efficacious to engage men to adhere thereto? How can the worst of present evils accompanying or following vice, its innate deformity and turpitude, the distempers, disturbances, and disgraces springing from or waiting on it, (which also are often tempered with some kinds of pleasure, advantage, and satisfaction,) if no more hereafter is to be feared, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from the pursuit thereof? The danger of death itself (the most extreme punishment which man can inflict, and which our nature doth most abhor) doth not signify much toward the diverting indigent or ambitious or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts: it is Tully's observation, and he infers from it the necessity of supposing future punishments, in order to men's restraint from such actions; *Ut aliqua*, saith he, *in vita formido improbis esset posita, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt; quod videlicet intelligebant, his remotis, non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam*[a]: *That in this life there might be some fear upon wicked men, those ancients would have some punishments appointed below for impious persons; because, for-*

[a] Catal. IV. [cap. 4.]

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sooth, they understood, that these being set apart, death itself was not much to be feared. Neither is this persuasion thus only a special instrument of virtue, but the supposal thereof is otherwise a necessary support of all Religion, securing the first and main principles thereof, the being of a God and his providence: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof; of a providence over human affairs, such as might engage and encourage to religious performance, cannot subsist without supporting a future judgment: the objections that assail both, would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, if this shield did not receive and repel them. To see the most innocent and virtuous persons conflict all their days with crosses and hardships, and (as it sometimes happeneth) after all to die miserably, in great pain and ignominy; and again, to observe persons most outrageous in lewdness and injustice, to flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, ending their lives fairly and quietly[b]; hath caused some men to doubt whether, hath induced others flatly to disbelieve, that there is a good and just Governor of the world; and that, not without apparent cause, supposing all accounts to be made up here, no reckoning to remain to be cast up by divine goodness and justice hereafter; then would it in some sort seem true what he said, Θεῶν ὄνειδος τοὺς κακοὺς εὐδαιμονεῖν: *It is a reproach to God, that bad men should be so happy;* then had Diagoras argued probably from an unpunished perjury, that he

[b] Dies deficiat, si velim numerare, quibus bonis male evenerit: nec minus, si commemorem, quibus improbis optime.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. III. [32.]

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which suffered himself, and others under his care, to be so abused, did not exist, or did not regard what was done; and Dionysius might have authorised his sacrilege, by his prosperous navigation[c]; and with some show might Diogenes say, that Harpalus's successful treachery and rapine did *Testimonium contra deos dicere*[d], yield a shrewd testimony against the being and providence of God. But, on the contrary, supposing a judgment to follow, and a proceeding according thereto, all these discourses have no force or moment; God's present connivance, (as it were,) or patient indulgence toward bad men, will argue no more than what becomes him; his excess of goodness in expecting those bad men's return to a better mind, or his wise severity in suffering them to proceed to an inexcusable degree of wickedness, to be strictly inquired into and severely punished hereafter; as neither then doth God's permitting good men to suffer deeply here infer any thing prejudicial to his goodness or justice; since thereby he makes them fitter for, and gives them a surer title to that reward, which he intends hereafter, after trial and approbation of their virtue, to confer upon them. Thus doth this doctrine clear the providence and establish the great attributes of God; therefore doth Christianity most fully and clearly teach, most earnestly and frequently inculcate this point, with all possible advantage, both for the justification of the Divine attributes, and

[c] [Cic. de Nat. Deor. III. 34.]

[d] [Ibid.] Improborum igitur prosperitates, secundæque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum ac potestatem.—[III. 36.]

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the excitation of us to a virtuous and pious life. It tells us, that all men's actions are registered in books written with greatest punctuality and exactness, (the books of Divine omniscience;) that all persons shall be cited, and presented at the bar; (*We must all φανερωθῆναι, be made to appear, παρίστασθαι, be set forth, at the judgment-seat of Christ: I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God's throne;*) that every thought, every word, every work of man shall be disclosed and discussed, with its due quality and desert; (*God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts: Every idle word that men shall speak, thereof they shall render account at the day of judgment: Every work shall be brought into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;*) that according to the quality of their doings, thus detected and examined, the merits of each cause weighed, every plea heard, every case considered and tried according to truth, men shall be acquitted and commended, or declared guilty and condemned; a definite sentence passing upon every one, ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἑκάστῳ, *Praise* (that is, generally, a due taxation and esteem, according to desert) *shall be made to every one* by the righteous Judge; that this sentence doth include a gracious reward and a just punishment assigned respectively; everlasting glory and joy to them which have done well, endless shame and sorrow to them who have done ill; which shall be infallibly executed: (for, *God will render to every man according to his works: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal*

Dan. vii. 10. Rev. xx. 12. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rom. xiv. 10. Rev. xx. 12. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Matt. xii. 36. Eccles. xii. 14. Vid. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6—10.

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life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil—but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good; so St Paul in the second to the Romans: *We must all appear before the tribunal of Christ, ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος, that every one may bear according to the things done in the body, whether good or evil.*) That all this shall be performed in a most public and solemn manner, in open court, in the face of all the world, before angels and men; to the conviction and satisfaction of all; so that the consciences of all concerned shall be forced to acquiesce in their doom, as most just and equal; and all shall confess, and say with them in the Revelation, *Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his ways: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.*

2 Cor. v. 10.

Matt. xxv. 31, &c. Luke xii. 9. Rom. ii. 5.

Rev. xix. 1, 2; xvi. 7; xv. 3.

Thus (and much more fully than time will permit me to relate) doth our Religion and Holy Scripture set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein the wonderful clemency of God shall be demonstrated; wherein his exact justice shall be declared; wherein the knotty mysteries of his providence shall be unfolded; wherein his honour (that seems now to suffer so much) shall be fully repaired and vindicated; wherein all scores, that now run on, shall be quitted and made even. Such, I say, shall the judgment itself be; the consideration of which, if it make no impression upon our hearts, if it beget

Rom. ii. 5.

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no dread within us, if it do not render us somewhat wary and watchful over our doings, what means can be imagined able? What method apt to do it? What a desperate hardness and insensibility do we lie under! How deplorably blind and stupid are we! More stupid than Felix, who hearing St Paul discourse of judgment to come, could not forbear trembling: more blind and senseless than those obstinate sons of darkness, the devils themselves, who believe and tremble. Acts xxiv. 25. James. ii. 19.

But passing the judgment, let us (which should more still engage us, and may work further on us to the same purpose) consider the Judge: *He shall come to judge;*—He: he that came once in our nature, (with wonderful condescension of grace and charity,) to free us from sin and misery; he that suffered so deeply for us; he that died to redeem us; he shall come to judge. The original and absolute right or power of judging appertains to God, whose creatures, whose subjects, whose servants we are naturally; as he is the Sovereign Lord and King, so is he the Judge of all; as we owe obedience to the laws he hath prescribed us, performance of the service he hath allotted us, improvement of the talents he hath committed to us; so we stand bound to render account to him of the due performance in those respects, and obnoxious to the judgment he shall make thereof. All judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, by virtue of authority and power derived from him: and it (for the honour of his Son, for the comfort of us) hath he delegated and committed to Jesus our Saviour: not immediately Heb. xii. 23. Gen. xviii. 25.

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by himself, but by his Son he hath determined to
John v. 22. judge the world; *The Father judgeth no man,* (saith our Saviour himself,) *but hath committed all*
Acts xvii. 31. *judgment to the Son:* and, *God,* saith St Paul, *hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained:*
Acts x. 42. and, saith St Peter, *God hath commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick*
Rom. xiv. 10. *and dead:* and it is the judgment-seat of Christ,
2 Cor. v. 10. before which we must all appear: in fine, *The*
John v. 27. *Father,* saith our Saviour, *hath given to the Son authority to execute judgment, for that he is the Son of man;* (hath committed to him authority regal and judicial; for that he is that Son of man, whom God hath designed to this office, even of old, as we see in Daniel vii. 13, 14. and in Isaiah ix. 6, 7.)

It is plain, then, that our Saviour is by designment and deputation from God invested with this great office and power. And why God so ap-
John v. 23. pointed him many reasons may be assigned; upon many accounts our Saviour's person may appear most fit for this grand employment. How could God more plainly shew his goodness in this matter, than by constituting such a Judge? Seeing that judgment should be passed upon us, was necessary and requisite; how could the terror and severity thereof be better tempered, than by putting the execution thereof into such hands? Whom, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit to, than to him who is by nature our brother; who in disposition is meek and lowly, compassionate and merciful; who by so many signal experiments hath expressed such an excess of kindness

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and charity toward us; who hath so conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend of mankind; that he ardently desires the salvation of all men, even of his worst enemies; whom he spent his blood for, whom he prayed for, dying; whom he continually invites to reconciliation and repentance? How also could God better declare his justice, than in exalting him to this pitch, who out of obedience and compliance with his will descended so low, and underwent so much? Who better deserved a crown, who more righteously would manage a sceptre, than he who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a scourge? It was also equal and fit, that he who was unworthily rejected and despised, cruelly abused and persecuted, unjustly accused, condemned, and slaughtered by men, should be requited with power to right himself upon them; to reprobate them worthily who had unworthily rejected him; to judge them justly, who had wickedly condemned him; to punish them severely, who had unmercifully afflicted him; that he should see his proud and spiteful enemies lying under his feet, at his discretion.

Add hereto the wisdom of God in designing him to be judge, whom they who were to be judged might see and hear, and converse with; whom the godly with cheerful satisfaction and comfort, the wicked with befitting terror and astonishment, might behold; they with unexpressible joy hear him commending, acquitting, and blessing them; those with dismal amazement and regret hear him pronouncing the fatal sentence and curse upon them; they with humble thankfulness acknowledge his grace, those with confusion confess their guilt:

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Rev. i. 7. *Behold,* saith St John in the Revelation, *he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, even they* Jer. x. 10. *who did pierce him.* The dreadful presence of God Ps. lxxvi. 7. were neither discernible nor supportable by guilty Ps. cxxx. 3. men: *Who may stand in his sight when once he is* Ps. xlvi. 6. *angry?* Who could endure to hear that voice, at Job xxvi. 11. which the earth melteth; that reproof, at which the pillars of heaven tremble; that majesty, in presence Isai. vi. 2. whereof the purest seraphims are constrained to hide their faces? How should impure men abide that face which no man can behold and live? But the milder, though glorious and bright aspect of the Son of man, all men, in some manner, may be capable to see; and, if we believe St Austin, *Rectum erat ut judicandi viderent judicem*[a]; *It was fit that they who were to be judged should see their judge.*

So much reason there was, (and more questionless, beyond what we can know or comprehend,) that our Saviour Jesus should be designed and deputed to this office; in it we may admire the wisdom and adore the justice of God; for it we may applaud his goodness and clemency.

We may also (that this doctrine may have the greater impression upon our hearts and influence upon our practice) further consider, how great an aggravation it will seem to our whether foolish perverseness or slothful negligence; what extreme disingenuity, how wretched ingratitude it will argue in us, to be cast and condemned by such a Judge; a Judge so just and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us! With what face, we having transgressed his most good and righteous laws; having violated our manifold obliga-

[a] [Serm. CXXVII. Opp. Tom. V. col. 625 A.]

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tions and engagements toward him; having abused his so great love and good-will toward us; having rejected his gracious tenders of mercy and favour; defeated his most serious purposes, frustrated his most earnest endeavours for our good; having so forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure, shall we appear in his presence? how shall we bear the frowns of so dear love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extreme fury, of so great majesty provoked by such affronts? With what heart shall we be able to hear that voice, which did once so sweetly and affectionately sound words of peace and comfort in our ears; that so kindly invited us to peace, so meekly entreated us to compliance, now uttering only bitter complaints and rebukes, thundering forth words of indignation and terror, denouncing horrible threats and curses upon us? But let this suffice for the nature of the office and act of judging, and for the Person exercising it. Here is further implied,

II. The manner of its exercise, or execution; or rather the manner of his address and proceeding thereto, *From thence he shall come;* the which we have in Scripture (for begetting answerable veneration, regard, and awe within us) described to be with greatest solemnity, glory, and magnificence. He came once in a meek humility to teach us our duty, but he shall come again with a terrible majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest heavens, in a most royal state, attended upon with a numerous, (or rather an innumerable, πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι ἄγγελοι, *All his holy angels;* it is Matt. xxv. 31: *When the Son of man*

Acts iii. 21. 1 Thess. iv. 16. 2 Thess. i. 7.

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shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him; that is, *An innumerable company,* as we read it, Heb. xii. 22,) an innumerably numerous and pompous train of glorious angels, accompanied with triumphant shouts and acclamations; a trumpet, blown by the mouth of an archangel, sounding before him an universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately, and in the twinkling of an eye, shake all the earth, and rouse the dead out of their mortal slumber: *This same Jesus,* said the angels to the apostles, expressing the thing in a more plain and simple manner, *which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven;* (a cloud took him up from their eyes; the clouds should restore him to sight; for, *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him,* saith St John:) and, *They shall see the Son of man,* himself tells us, *coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:* and, *The Lord himself,* saith St Paul, *shall descend from heaven,* ἐν κελεύσματι, *with a shout,* with an exciting summons, *with the voice of an archangel, with the trump of God: The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render to every man according to his practice: When the Son of man shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.* So the Scriptures (to the purpose forementioned, to beget respect and dread in us) declare, that our Saviour shall come at the end of the world, at the day of judgment, and how.

1 Thess. iv. 16.
1 Cor. xv. 52.
Acts i. 11.
2 Thess. i. 7, 9.
Rev. i. 7.
Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64.
1 Thess. iv. 16.
Matt. xvi. 27.
2 Thess. i. 7.

Here is further determined the extent of this judgment: *He shall come to judge;* Whom? How many? All, without exception; expressed by the

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words, *Quick and dead:* which expression is taken from those words of St Peter, wherein our Saviour is said to be designed by God, κριτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν, *The judge of the living and the dead:* or of St Paul, *I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearance and his kingdom:* or those of St Peter again, *Who shall render an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead:* add a like place, *That he may be Lord both of the dead and living:* these places evidently confirming the truth of the proposition; yet so that the meaning thereof hath remained somewhat dubious, and that themselves have seemed to need explication: for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, by desert, by divine appointment, are subject, to undergo death, (for, *What man is he that shall not see death? It is appointed,* ἀπόκειται, *for men once to die, and after death judgment,*) why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged? as we see it expressed in the Revelation; *I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God—and the dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works:* the dead were judged; no mention is made of the living, wherefore some have interpreted the dead and living, not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men; the living souls and dead bodies of men: others have taken them metaphorically, the living, (that is, righteous men, men endued with a spiritual life;) the dead, (that is, men dead in trespasses and sins, void of spiritual sense and activity). But the difficulty mentioned is not so strong as to force upon us so remote and absonous expositions: St

Acts x. 42. 2 Tim. iv. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 5. Rom. xiv. 9. Ps. lxxxix. 48. Heb. ix. 27. Rev. xx. 12. Eph. ii. 1.

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Paul hath evidently enough shewed us how to understand the words, and how to solve the knot propounded; that by the living are to be understood those who shall be found (and as it were surprised) alive when our Saviour comes; by the dead, all others, who before that time had died, and shall be raised at the sound of the last trump;

1 Thess. iv. 15. *This we say to you,* saith he to the Thessalonians, *in the word of the Lord,* ἐν λόγῳ Κυρίου (or *as the word of the Lord,*) *that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.* Our Lord, therefore, shall find some alive when he comes; therefore what is said of all men's being appointed to taste death, is to be understood with this exception; all but those whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's

Matt. xxiv. 42. coming, which is set out as sudden and unexpected,

1 Thess. v. 2. like the coming of a thief in the night. Neither are those persons so exempted from death, but that they must undergo that which is equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with them who have died:

1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. *Behold,* saith St Paul again to the Corinthians, *I tell you a mystery; We shall not indeed all fall asleep,* (or *not all die,*) *but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye:* which words with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of the expression here. The sum is, that all men, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what age soever, shall be judged; high and low, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest princes and lords, as well as the meanest subjects and slaves; the deepest scholars, as well as the simplest idiots: in a

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word, all men whatever, without any exception, without any acceptance of persons, must appear before this Judge, must undergo this trial and sentence.

Thus shall he come to judge both quick and dead: than the belief of which point there is none more necessary, than the consideration of which none more profitable; necessary and profitable in many respects.

1 The faith and regard thereof will preserve us from disbelieving, from being offended with, from repining at the providence of God; from being dissatisfied with his proceeding and dispensations here, either toward ourselves or others.

2 It may also keep us from rash censure, and invading our Lord's office; *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he stands or falls: Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ: There is one lawgiver, who can save or destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts.* Rom. xiv. 4, 10. James iv. 12. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

3 It may support and comfort us against all unjust and uncharitable censures, groundless surmises and slanders, undeserved scorns and reproaches of men; for that assuredly at that judgment right shall be done thee; thy innocence shall be cleared, thy honour vindicated and repaired; *God shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday*: so that approving thy conscience to God, thou mayest say Ps. xxxvii. 6.

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1 Cor. iv. 3. with St Paul, *With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.*

4 It is the most powerful and effectual means possible to beget sincerity in us; to render us circumspect; to stir us up to diligence in all our conversation, in our thoughts, words, and actions: for since the most inward recesses of our hearts must be searched out, our most secret designs and desires must be brought to light, what profit will it be to dissemble, to disguise, to conceal our thoughts? Since we must render an account of every thought that riseth in our minds, (at least which is entertained there,) of every word that passeth through our mouth, of every action we undertake, what reason have we, with more attentive and accurate regard to consider and mind what we do? Since it is certain we shall be judged, but uncertain when we shall be called thereto, how watchful are we concerned to be, how observant of our Saviour's admonition:

Matt. xxiv. 42; xxv. 13. Rev. iii. 3. *Watch, for ye do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh! If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I shall come upon thee.* It may be (for all we know) the next day, the next hour, when death shall call us to that prison, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what a misery will it be to be surprised, to be found unprepared,

2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. unable to render a good account! *What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?*

5 No persuasion, no consideration doth promise such efficacy towards the rousing of our pas-

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sions, or duly ordering and employing them upon religious practice; especially it sets on work those two great engines and mighty springs of action, fear and hope. How can we believe and think of this point without being possessed with a hideous fear of abiding so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a condemnation, (if we are sensible of having been very faulty or negligent in performance of our duty;) without a very comfortable hope of coming well off, of finding favour and mercy in that day, of being happily rewarded, if we are conscious to ourselves of having endeavoured seriously and carefully to please God, and obey his commandments? If we can in our hearts say with St Paul, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith;* we may also say confidently with him, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me:* if, by virtue of the grace of God, which appeared to all men, and according to its instruction, we have denied ungodliness, worldly lusts, and lived soberly, righteously, and piously in this present world, we may joyfully expect the blessed hope and appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. i. 18.

2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13.

I conclude, exhorting and wishing that the meditation of this most important business may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem (with that devout man) always to hear the last trumpet sounding in our ears, and piercing into our hearts; that so with a pious awe and a well-grounded hope we may expect the coming of our Lord, and love his appearance; that being hence

2 Tim. iv. 8.

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restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being moved to a watchful and circumspect pursuit of all virtue and piety, guiding our lives inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and man, we may be able to render a good account, and with comfort unexpressible hear those happy sentences; *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Unto the possession whereof, God in his mercy bring us, by the merits of our Saviour, in obedience to our Lord, according to the grace and mercy of our most righteous Judge, Jesus; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for ever, be all praise and glory. *Amen.*

Matt. xxv. 21, 34.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

The whole Creed (as was sometime formerly observed) being probably built upon, and seeming no other than an enlargement or dilatation of that faith and confession required at Baptism in the blessed Trinity; having surveyed the two former parts concerning the two first Persons, God the Father, and God the Son; we are now come to the third great branch thereof, wherein we profess our belief in the Holy Spirit of God; which is in order the third grand object of our faith: whereof seeing there is here only a simple mention (as it were) made, without any description, any characters thereof expressed, (such as in this Creed are assigned to the other Persons; such, as in the Constantinopolitan, and other Creeds after it, are attributed to

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this,) we must endeavour in some manner to supply that omission, by considering, 1 The *quid;* 2 The *quale,* thereof: first, I say, What is its nature? 2 What peculiar characters, offices, and operations (according to that mystical economy revealed in the Gospel) are attributed and appertain thereto?

As for the first, the nature thereof, or what it is; we may observe, that the word spirit, (which primitively and properly signifies wind, or breath,) because the wind is a being not immediately exposed to sense, yet of great mobility and force, discovering itself to be so by many great and conspicuous effects, is therefore translated to denote those excellent intellectual beings, which, by reason of their more pure and subtle nature, being otherwise indiscernible to sense, yet by manifest operations discovering their existence and great activity, are called spirits: such as are in the first place God Almighty, (who invisibly pervades and penetrates and actuates all things, and is therefore by even Virgil himself[a], according to Lactantius and Macrobius's judgment, styled spirit,) and next the angels, and then the souls of men. Of these beings there is one, mentioned through the Scripture, called *The Holy Spirit, The Spirit of God, The Spirit of Christ, The eternal Spirit;* and sometimes simply by way of excellency, *The Spirit:* the nature of which Spirit we may best understand, by

[a] Cœlum ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit. Virg. Æn. VI. [724].
Otherwhere,
Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.
Georg. IV. [221].

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considering, that the Holy Scripture doth attribute and ascribe to him,

I. Divine properties and perfections, communicably peculiar to God.

II. Divine works and operations.

III. Divine appellations and titles.

IV. A co-ordination in dignity; a participation of Divine honour and worship.

V. An essential union with God the Father and God the Son; together with,

VI. A personal and relative distinction from them: also,

VII. A derivation of being from the two first Persons, with an intimate relation unto them springing thence. From the declaration and proof of which particulars, will plainly follow those doctrines, which we are bound to believe, against those Macedonians, Sabellians, Socinians, and the like, ἑτεροδοξοῦντες, who have presumed to contradict and oppugn either the personality or the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, or his procession from the Father and the Son. Briefly therefore, I say,

I. The Scripture ascribes to the Holy Ghost the Divine properties and perfections; the very word holy (so absolutely and specially, and characteristically attributed to him) seems itself to import so much: for, (as it is in Hannah's prayer,)

1 Sam. ii. 2. *There is none holy as the Lord, there is none beside him;* none absolutely, perfectly holy, but God: *holy;* that is, by nature exalted and separated from all other things at a distance unapproachable, peculiarly venerable and august[b]:) whence *The Holy One* is a name and distinguishing attribute of God.

[b] Vid. Mr Med. Disc. II. p. 15.

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The name spirit, simply put, may seem also to imply the same; denoting highest purity and actuality. But we have further the perfections of eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence (the most high perfections, and proper to God) attributed to him. Eternity; for he is expressly called αἰώνιον Πνεῦμα; *Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless to God.* Omnipresence; *Whither,* saith David, *shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* The question imports a negation, and a reason thereof: there is no flying from God's Spirit, for that it is everywhere. Omniscience; *The Spirit searcheth all things,* (that is, perfectly to the bottom understands all things,) *even the depths of God;* the things of God, which to know is as far above a creature, as for one man to know the thoughts, inclinations, and affections of another man; (such an argument St Paul insinuates). Particularly Prescience, the knowledge of future events, (which is the highest and hardest kind of knowledge, and immediately proper to God, and therefore called divination,) is in a special manner everywhere appropriated to the Spirit, as the immediate fountain thereof; whence he is called the prophetical Spirit. To which we may add, independency of will and action; for, as St Paul speaks, *All these things*) the production of all those excellent graces, the distribution of all those admirable gifts) *doth the one and the same Spirit work, dividing to every one as he pleaseth: Ubi vult spirat; The Spirit blows where he pleaseth;* doth everywhere what he will. Absolute goodness; *Thy Spirit is good,* saith David; *lead me into the land of uprightness.* Perfect veracity, implied by the

Heb. ix. 14. Ps. cxxxix. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. 1 Cor. xii. 11. John iii. 8. Ps. cxliii. 10.

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1 John v. 6. abstract word, truth; *It is the Spirit,* saith St John, *that witnesseth, for the Spirit is truth;* truth itself, the highest, most perfect truth. Lastly,

II. Omnipotence; demonstrated by those works which are said to be done by him; which are the greatest and hardest possible: such as creation; working of miracles; revelation of future events; vivification; renovation of men's minds; justification, and the like; which, both according to the nature of the thing and in Scripture account, do require a power no less than infinite and most Divine to effect them: the places are frequent and obvious, which ascribe such works to the Holy Spirit; I cannot stand to recite them.

Rom. xv. 19. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Rom. viii. 11.

III. To the Holy Ghost are also assigned the Divine names and titles, *Jehovah, Lord, God,* and those consequently which go along with them. For often, and upon divers occasions, the same things are said to be done by God, or to God, and by, or to the Spirit; one word interpreting, or concurring in signification with the other, by reason of that real identity which belongs to the things signified by them. It is said of the distrustful and disobedient Israelites in the Psalms, that *They tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel:* that *They tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:* which is expressed thus by the Prophet Isaiah; *They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.* St Peter, in the Acts, chargeth Ananias of having lied to the Holy Spirit, and having lied to God; *Why,* saith he, *Ananias, hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto* (or *cozen*) *the Holy Spirit? thou hast not lied unto men, but to God:* questionless by both those expressions designing the same thing, and implying

Ps. lxxviii. 41, 56. Isa. lxiii. 10. Acts v. 3, 4.

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the Holy Ghost to be God. Our Saviour is said to be conceived by the Holy Ghost, and therefore to be called the Son of God: he is said to perform miracles sometimes by the power of God, sometimes by the power of the Holy Ghost; *If I,* saith St Matthew, *by the Holy Spirit cast out devils: If I by the finger of God cast them out,* saith St Luke: and it is ordinary for what is sometimes called *The word of God,* to be otherwise called *The word of the Spirit;* proceeding from the same understanding, being dictated by the same operation. We are also said to be θεοδίδακτοι, taught of God, in respect to the instruction and guidance received from him: in fine, every good Christian is said to be a temple; a temple of God; because the Spirit of God dwells in him.

Luke i. 35. Rom. xv. 19. Matt. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20. 1 Thess. iv. 8. Vid. Acts xxviii. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iii. 17. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. Eph. ii. 22.

IV. A co-ordinate dignity; a parity of honour and worship with God the Father and God the Son is ascribed to the Holy Spirit: this appears signally in our Saviour's institution of Baptism to be administered in the joint names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; whereby we are initiated into the like faith and acknowledgment; are obliged to the same worship and obedience of all three Persons. The same appears by that benediction of St Paul, imploring upon the Corinthians the Divine favour and assistance, according to that mystical economy, which the Gospel exhibits; *The grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God,* (that is, of God the Father,) *and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* As also from that place of St Paul; *By Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father:* he having an equal share with God our Saviour in the Gospel dispensation

Matt. xxviii. 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Eph. ii. 18.

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of grace and salvation unto men. We also have the same co-ordination clearly supposed in 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6: *There are,* saith St Paul, *divisions of favours, but the same Spirit: and there are divisions of ministries, but the same Lord;* (i. e. the same Christ:) *and there are divisions of operations, but the same God,* or Father: all the gracious gifts of the Gospel are bestowed; all the sacred ministries are managed; all the wonderful performances are brought to pass, by the joint and equal conduct and co-operation of these three Divine Persons. And that sovereign regard our Saviour hath declared due to the honour and authority of the Holy Ghost, insomuch that blasphemy against him is a sin peculiarly irremissible, argues his Divinity; since neither, according to the reason of the thing, could offending against the fame of a creature be capable of such aggravations; nor could God in a manner prefer the honour of a creature before his own.

V. That there is an essential union between the Holy Ghost and the other Divine Persons, is both by evident consequence deducible from, and is immediately asserted in Scripture. For that there is but one God, is there continually taught and inculcated upon us; and how it calls the Holy Ghost, we have seen; therefore necessarily the Holy Ghost doth partake of that one Divine essence. Also, that the Holy Ghost is God, is inferred from that
1 Cor. ii. 11. comparison of St Paul between the spirit of a man in respect to man, and the Spirit of God in respect to God; as the spirit of man is intrinsical to man, so the Spirit of God is to him; and by reason of the perfect simplicity of the Divine nature, that

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which subsists in God must necessarily be God: in fine, St John expressly tells us, that *There are three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one:* they are one, and yet, John v. 7.

VI. There is a personal distinction of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son: for they are three; three persons: for that not only distinct names, but peculiar operations are assigned to them; which should not be done without good reason, if there were no personal distinction: that which also appears from his being said to proceed from the Father, and to be sent from him; from his being an advocate and interceding with the Father; his crying within us, Abba, Father, our having access in him to the Father: as also, his being sent by the Son; his glorifying him; receiving of his; his not speaking from himself: which expressions plainly argue a personal distinction: as do also our Saviour's birth by him, his performing miracles by him; in a word, God's executing all his purposes of grace and power by him. John xiv. 26. Rom. viii. 27. Gal. iv. 6. Eph. ii. 18. John xv. 26; xvi. 13, 14.

VII. Lastly, That the Holy Spirit doth derive the common Divine essence from the Father and the Son is thence sufficiently apparent, for that he is called *The Spirit of the Father*, and also *The Spirit of the Son:* the Spirit of the Father, because he doth ἐκπορεύεσθαι, in a manner incomprehensible, proceed and emanate from the Father; is of him, is sent by him: for the same reason is he the Spirit of the Son; wherefore he is also expressly said to be sent by the Son. Matt. x. 20. John xiv. 26; xv. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 11. Phil. i. 19.

From these truths thus briefly declared doth follow, that the Holy Ghost is one of the Divine

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Persons, in order the third, partaking of the Divine nature, and receiving it by communication from the Father and the Son: which is all we intended to shew concerning his nature.

I proceed to consider the peculiar characters, offices, and operations of the Holy Spirit. There be many particular functions and operations in a special manner attributed and appropriated to the Holy Spirit; which, as they respect God, seem reducible to two general ones, the declaration of God's mind, and the execution of his will; as they respect man, (for in regard to other beings the Scripture doth not so much consider what he performs, as not so much concerning us to know,) the producing in us all qualities and dispositions, the guiding and aiding us in all actions requisite or conducible to our eternal happiness and salvation do in a manner comprise them.

1 I say, the declaration of God's mind: whence he is called *The Spirit of truth, The Spirit of prophecy, The Spirit of revelation*; for that all supernatural light and instruction hath ever proceeded from him: he instructed all the prophets that have been since the world began to know, he enabled them to speak the mind of God concerning things present and future: *Holy men* (that have taught men their duty, and led them in the way to happiness) were but his instruments, and *spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:* by his inspiration the Holy Scriptures (the most full and certain witnesses of God's mind) were conceived; he guided the Apostles into all truth; and by them instructed all the world in the knowledge of God's gracious intentions toward mankind, and the holy mysteries

John xv. 26. Rev. xix. 10. Eph. i. 17. Luke i. 70. 2 Pet. i. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 16. John xvi. 13. Vid. 1 Cor. ii. 10. Eph. iii. 5.

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of the Gospel. All the knowledge we can pretend to in these things doth proceed from his revelation, doth rely upon his authority.

2 The execution of God's will. Whence he is called *The power of God,* (the substantial power and virtue of God,) and *The hand of God;* and whatever God hath designed, he is said to perform by him: *By him he framed the world: He garnished the heavens,* as Job speaketh: by him he governs the world; all extraordinary works of providence, (when God beside the common law and usual course of nature interposeth,) all miraculous performances, being attributed to his energy; but especially by him (that which next is to be considered) he manages that work, by Divine goodness so earnestly designed, of man's salvation: which he doth,

Luke i. 35; xi. 20.

Ps. xxxiii. 6. Job xxvi. 13. Gen. i. 1.

3 By working in us good dispositions and qualities; by guiding and aiding us in our actions. We are naturally void of these good dispositions of understanding, of will, of affection, which are necessary to make us anywise acceptable to God, fit to serve and please him, capable of any favour from him, of any true happiness in ourselves; our minds, I say, are blind and stupid, ignorant and prone to error, especially in things supernatural and abstracted from ordinary sense; our wills stubborn and froward, vain and unstable, inclining to evil, and averse from what is most truly good; our affections very irregular and unsettled: to remove which bad dispositions, (inconsistent with God's friendship and favour, tending to misery,) and to beget those contrary to them, the knowledge and belief of Divine truth, a love of, and willing

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compliance with goodness, a well-disposed, orderly, and steady frame of spirit, God in mercy hath appointed the Holy Spirit; who first opening our hearts, so as to let in and apprehend the light of Divine truth propounded to us; then by the representation of proper arguments persuading us to embrace it, begets Divine knowledge and faith in our minds, (which is the work of illumination and instruction, the first part of this office;) then by continual impressions bends our inclinations, and mollifies our hearts, and subdues our affections to a willing compliance with, a cheerful complacence in that which is good and pleasing to God; so begetting all pious and virtuous inclinations in us, reverence to God, charity to men, sobriety and purity, and the rest of those amiable and heavenly virtues, (which is the work of sanctification, another great part of his office:) both which together, (illumination of our mind, sanctification of our will and affections) do constitute that work, which is styled the regeneration, renovation, vivification, new creation, resurrection; putting off the old, putting on the new man; of a man; the faculties of our souls being so much changed, and we made, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that to which before we were altogether indisposed and unfit. Neither only doth he alter and constitute our dispositions, but he directs and governs our actions; leading and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's will and law. As we live by him, (have a new spiritual life implanted in us,) so we walk by him, by his continual guidance and assistance. He reclaims us from sin and error; supports and strengthens us in temptation; advises,

Acts xvi. 14.

Tit. iii. 5. Eph. iv. 23; ii. 5. Col. ii. 12, 13. Eph. ii. 10; iv. 22, 24. 2 Cor. v. 17.

Gal. v. 25. Rom. viii. 14.

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excites, encourages us to works of virtue and piety: particularly he guides and quickens us in devotion, shewing us what we should ask, raising in us holy desires and comfortable hopes thereof, disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of love, and reverence, and humble confidence. Rom. viii. 26, 27. 1 John v. 14.

It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and sustain us, as in all our religious practice, so particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses, and afflictions; to beget joy, peace, and satisfaction in us, in all our doings and all our sufferings: whence he hath the title of *Comforter*. Rom. xv. 13. 1 Pet. i. 8. Heb. iii. 6.

It is also a great part thereof to assure us of God's love and favour; that we are his children; and to confirm us in the hopes of our everlasting inheritance. We feeling ourselves to live by him, to love God and goodness, to desire and delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to hope God loves and favours us; and that he, having by so authentic a seal ratified his word and promise; having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful first-fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder designed and promised us, of everlasting joy and bliss. 2 Cor. v. 5; i. 22. Eph. i. 14.

Lastly, The Holy Ghost doth intercede for us with God; is our advocate and assistant in the presenting our supplications, and procuring our good: he cries in us; he pleads for us to God: whence he is peculiarly called Παράκλητος; that is, one who is called in by his good word or countenance to aid him whose cause is to be examined, or whose petition is to be considered.

To which things I may add, that the Holy Ghost is designed to be, as it were, the soul, which 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

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informs, enlivens, and actuates the whole body of the Church; connecting and containing together the members thereof in spiritual union, life, and motion; especially quickening and moving the principal members (the governors and pastors) thereof; constituting them in their function, qualifying them for the discharge thereof, guiding and assisting them therein.

Acts xx. 28. Eph. iv. 12.

Such is the office, such the operations of the Holy Ghost; the which we should more distinctly and fully consider, if the time and nature of this exercise would give leave.

The use of these doctrines (the influence the belief and consideration of this article should have upon our practice) is briefly, 1 To oblige us to render all due honour and adoration to the divine majesty of the blessed Spirit. 2 To work in us an humble affection and a devout thankfulness to God for so inestimable a favour conferred upon us, such as is the presence and inhabitation, the counsel, conduct, and assistance of God's holy Spirit in us: him we must acknowledge the author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happiness obtainable by us; to him we must render all thanks and praise: therefore, 3 To excite us to desire earnestly and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of such excellent benefits, such graces, such gifts, such privileges, such joys, and blessings unexpressible: if we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he will certainly come; so hath our Saviour promised, that *Our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask him.* 4 We should endeavour to demean ourselves well toward the

Luke xi. 13.

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Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly guest, vouchsafing to come unto us, a ready entrance and kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all possible respect and observance; hearkening attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obeying them; not quenching the Divine light or devout heat he kindles in us; not resisting his kindly motions and persuasions; not grieving or vexing him; that so with satisfaction he may continue and abide with us, to our infinite benefit and comfort: it should engage us to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may be fit temples for so holy and pure a Spirit to dwell in, lest he loathe and forsake us. 5 It is matter of comfort and encouragement (exceedingly useful and necessary for us) to consider, that we have such a guide and assistant in our religious practice and spiritual warfare. If our lusts be strong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty, we need not be disheartened, having this all-wise and all-mighty friend to advise and help us: his grace is sufficient for us, against all the strengths of hell, flesh, and the world. Let our duty be never so hard, and our natural force never so weak, we shall be able to do all things by him that strengtheneth us; if we will but faithfully apply ourselves to him for his aid, we cannot fail of good success.

The Holy Catholic Church.

The Holy Catholic Church: in the more ancient forms it ran only, *Holy Church*, (the word *Catholic* being left out;) and in some of them it had not the same position as now, being put in the last

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place[a]: and it seems in the most ancient Symbols the Church was not propounded as an object of faith directly and immediately, but was mentioned obliquely, upon occasion of remission of sins ministered by it, of eternal life obtained in it: as we may reasonably deem from that notable place in St Cyprian; *Nam cum dicunt,* (when they profess in the Symbol at Baptism,) *Credis remissionem peccatorum et vitam æternam per Sanctam Ecclesiam*[b]*:* to which kind of expression that place in Tertullian seems to allude, *Cum sub tribus et testatio fidei, et sponsio salutis pignerentur, necessario adjicitur Ecclesiæ mentio*[c]. And if we consult the most ancient summaries of faith extant in Irenæus[d] and Tertullian[e], and composed by them, questionless according to the general sense of their times, we shall not find this article propounded; not even in the Nicene Creed itself[f]. It is therefore not unprobable, that this article (either in substance, or at least according to this manner of proposal and expression) is of a later standing than the rest; being introduced (as is likely) upon occasion of those many heresies and schisms, which continually sprang up, to secure the truth of Christian doctrine, the authority of ecclesiastical discipline, the peace

[a] Vid. Lib. de Symb. ad Catech. [Sancta Ecclesia, in qua omnis hujus sacramenti terminatur auctoritas.—Lib. II. § 24. Inter Opp. S. Aug. Tom. VI. col. 568 C. Sacramenti hujus conclusio per Ecclesiam terminatur.—Lib. III. § 13. col. 575 B. Propterea hujus conclusio sacramenti per Sanctam Ecclesiam terminatur.—Lib. IV. § 13. col. 582 C.]

[b] Epist. lxx. ad Magnum. [Opp. p. 154.]

[c] De Bapt. cap. 6. [Opp. p. 226 D.]

[d] [Lib. I. cap. 10, p. 48.]

[e] [De Virg. Vel. cap. 1, Opp. p. 173 A. De Præscript. Hæret. cap. 13, p. 206 D. Adv. Prax. cap. 2, p. 501 B.]

[f] Cf. Theodor. Eccles. Hist. Lib. I. cap. 12.

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and unity of the Church, by obliging men to profess their disclaiming any consent or conspiracy with those erroneous and contentious people, who had devised new, destructive, or dangerous conceits, against the general consent of Christians, and drove on factions contrary to the common order and peace of the Church; to profess, I say, their disclaiming such heretical principles and factious proceedings; and their constant adherence to the doctrines generally embraced by the Churches founded and instructed by the Apostles; as also their persistance in concord and communion with them; their readiness to observe the received customs and practices derived by them from apostolical institution; their submission to the laws and disciplines established in them by lawful authority. This I conceive to have been the meaning of them who first inserted this article, of believing the Holy Church, into the Creed: *I believe;* that is, I adhere unto, (for as we did at first observe, belief here is to be understood, as the nature of the matter should require,) I adhere unto, or am persuaded that I ought to adhere unto, that body of Christians, which diffused over the world, retains the faith taught, the discipline settled, the practices appointed by our Lord and his Apostles.

And that men should be obliged to do thus, there was ground both in the reason of the thing and in Scripture. In reason; there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us, that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable; to convince Sectaries, deviating from truth or duty, than the consent of all Churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, humour, custom; [so independent or co-ordinate in power] it is not

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imaginable, that they should soon or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the Apostles, or the practices instituted by them: which argument pressed by Tertullian[g], Irenæus[h], and other ancient defenders of Christian truth and peace, may well, as in matters of this kind, go for a demonstration: and that sentence of Tertullian may well pass for a certain principle and axiom: *Quod apud multos unum invenitur, non est erratum, sed traditum*[i]. And for Scripture; as it foretels, that
2 Pet. ii. 1. pernicious heresies should be introduced; that many
Acts xx. 29, 30. false prophets should arise, and seduce many; that
Matt. xxiv. 11; vii. 15. grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock; and men should arise, speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them; as they warn
Tit. iii. 10. us to take heed of such men, to reject and refuse
Rom. xvi. 17. heretics, to mark those which make divisions and
Col. ii. 8. 2 Thess. i. 6. scandals beside the doctrine which Christians had
1 Tim. vi. 3, 5. learnt, and to decline from them; to stand off (ἀφιστάναι) from such men as do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, that is, teach things different from apostolical doctrine, and do not consent to wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine according to godliness; [as it enjoins us,
2 Tim. i. 13, 14; iii. 14. to hold fast the form of sound words, heard from the Apostles; to continue in the things which we have learned, and been assured of, knowing of
Rom. vi. 17. whom we learned them; to obey from the heart, that form of doctrine, into which we were delivered;
1 Cor. xi. 2. to keep the ordinances, as the Apostles delivered

[g] Pariter utique constabit, id esse ab Apostolis traditum, quod apud Ecclesias Apostolorum fuerit sacrosanctum.—[Adv. Marc. Lib. IV. cap. 4. Opp. p. 415 D.]

[h] [Lib. I. cap. 10. Opp. pp. 48, 49.]

[i] De Præscript. Hæret. cap. 28. [Opp. p. 212 A.]

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them to us; to stand fast and hold the traditions which we were taught, whether by word or writing; to strive earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; as it enjoins us to walk orderly, to obey our guides, or rulers; to pursue peace, to maintain concord; to abide in charity with all good Christians;] as it teacheth us, that heresies and factions are works of the flesh, proceeding from pride and ambition; self-interest and covetousness; peevish and perverse humour; blindness and vanity; rashness and instability; dotage, distemper, and corruption of mind; deceit, cozenage, craft, and hypocrisy; want of good conscience and reverence to God; so it also describes the universality of them who stick to the truth, and observe the law of Christ; are disposed to charity and peace with all those who call upon our Lord with a pure mind; (that is, with all sincere Christians;) to be one body, knit together and compacted of parts affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment; and joined to, deriving sense and motion from, one Head; and informed by one Spirit; as one house, built upon the foundation of Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected; as one nation or people, subject to the same law and government, used to the same language, custom, and conversation; one city, one family; one flock under one shepherd; lastly, one Church or congregation: for, as sometimes every particular assembly of Christians[k], and sometimes a larger

2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6.
Jude 3.
2 Tim. ii. 22.
Eph. iv. 4; i. 22; iv. 16.
Rom. xii. 5.
1 Cor. xii. 12.
Eph. iv. 3, 4.
1 Cor. xii. 13.
Eph. ii. 21.
1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6, 7.
Heb. xii. 22, 23.
Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2, 10.

[k] Ubi tres, Ecclesia est, licet laici.—Tertull. de Exhort. Cast. [cap. 7. Opp. p. 522 A.]

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collection of particular societies, combined together in one order, or under one government, are termed Churches, ἐκκλησίαι, so the whole aggregation of all Churches, of all Christian people in the world, is frequently called the Church; even as the whole body of those who lived in profession and obedience to the Jewish law (which was a type and image of the Christian Church) was called קהל, (*Cahal,*) ἐκκλησία, *the congregation;* from whence I conceive this name was taken; and as among them that word did signify sometimes any particular assembly, sometimes the whole body of such persons, who had right and obligation to assemble for the service of God; so correspondently was the word used in the New Testament; sometimes for any society lesser or greater; sometimes for the whole body of God's new people; all the true subjects and servants of Christ; that is, for the Catholic or universal society of the faithful: yet even in this latter sense there is some distinction; for sometimes it is taken in a sense, (partly extensive, partly restrained,) so as to signify all those good men, and only such, which in all places and all times did or shall faithfully worship and serve God; sometimes in a sense (in one respect more wide, in another more strict) for all those who at present, in any age, through all parts of the world, do openly profess the sincere faith and obedience of Christ; maintaining an external practice agreeable to that profession: according to both which senses we may interpret *The Holy Catholic Church* here, they being, as to the duty required of us, conjoined and co-ordinate: for whatever is said of the Church in Scripture, (all the characters and commendations

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attributed to it) as it doth principally agree to it in the first of these senses, so it doth in some kind and measure agree to the latter: and therefore (without distinguishing) we may say, that this is the Holy Catholic Church, which we believe; *The Zion which the Lord hath chosen, which he hath desired for his habitation, where he hath resolved to place his rest and residence for ever: The mountain seated above all mountains, unto which all nations should flow: The house of God, built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; The pillar and firmament of truth,* which it by its profession and practice, in a manner, supporteth and maintaineth: *The new Jerusalem and city of God; the mother of us all; the beloved spouse of the Lamb; the elect generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people: The Church which Christ hath purchased with his own blood; which he delivered himself for, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and unblemished.*

Ps. cxxxii. 13. Isai. ii. 2. Mic. iv. 1. Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Rev. iii. 12. Gal. iv. 26. Rev. xix. 7. Matt. xxii. 2; xxv. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Acts xx. 28. Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.

Holy, we see it is expressly said to be in Christ's design: holy, as consisting of persons separated from the world, from profane and vain conversation, and wholly devoted to God's service; chosen to be saints, and without blemish before God in love; persons consecrated and constituted priests, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ: holy, as in many respects peculiarly related to God; as his chosen people, (in which respect the Jews were anciently called

1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23. Eph. i. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. i. 6; v. 10. Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18. Exod. xix. 5, 6.

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a holy, which is interpreted a chosen, special, peculiar, precious, separate people,) as his house and temple; wherein he in a special manner doth reside, wherein he is continually worshipped; *Now the temple of God is holy, whose temple are you,* saith St Paul; as οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, his domestics and familiars; as his children: holy, as redeemed by Christ, cleansed by his blood, sanctified by his Spirit; as professing a holy faith; as partakers of a holy and heavenly calling; as endued with holy graces and dispositions, performing holy services, obliged to holy conversation.

1 Cor. iii. 17.
Jude 20.
2 Tim. i. 9.
Heb. iii. 1.
Rom. xii. 1, &c.
1 Pet. i. 15.

The belief and consideration of which point doth serve,

1 To engage us to persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, delivered by our Saviour and his Apostles, attested unto by the general consent of Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion; not being carried about with various and strange doctrines; not being like children tossed with waves, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the cozenage of men, in craft, according to the method (or artifice) of deceit; (not being deluded with fine words, or fair pretences of many innovators;) but ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, *Holding the truth in love:* in love; that is another duty we are hence obliged to;

Heb. xiii. 9.
Eph. iv. 14, 15.

2 To maintain a hearty charity and good affection toward all good Christians; charity, which is the band that unites the Church, which preserves it in a sweet order and unity: consequently,

3 Readily to correspond and communicate with all good Christians, (all societies sincerely

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professing and practising faith, charity, and obedience to our Lord,) communicating, I say, in all offices of piety:

4 Submitting to all lawful order and discipline; studying peace, and to our power promoting concord among them: consequently,

5 To disavow and shun all factious combinations whatever of men corrupting the truth, or disturbing the peace of the Church.

6 In fine, sincerely to wish in our hearts, to pray earnestly for, to promote by our best endeavours, the peace and prosperity of that Holy Catholic Church, whereof we should be members and children: all which things St Paul directs us to in those few words, *Pursue righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those that call upon* (or *are called by the name of*) *the Lord with a pure heart.* I proceed. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

The Communion of Saints.

These words were not extant in any of the ancient Creeds, but were afterwards inserted: nor (as I conceive) doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent article, concerning the Catholic Church; and perhaps it was adjoined thereto, by way of apposition, for interpretation thereof. For it seems the meaning of them is this; that all the saints (those which are so either in outward esteem, as professing Christian faith and obedience; or those which are so in heart and inward disposition; those which either now converse upon earth, or which are received into heaven; all the saints) either in obligation should, or in effect do, communicate,

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partake, join together, consent, and agree in what concerns saints or members of the same body; in believing and acknowledging the same heavenly truth; in performance of devotions and offices of piety toward God, with and for one another; in charitable affection and good-will toward each other; in affording mutual assistance and supplies toward each other's either temporal or spiritual good; in mutual condolency and compassion of each other's evil; congratulation and complacency in each other's good; in *Minding*, according to St Paul's words, *with care the same things for one another: so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer together with it: or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.* This, briefly, seems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not further labour to shew the uses thereof; the doctrine so plainly carrying its obligation and use in its face.

1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

CONCERNING THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

I treated last upon the Catholic Church and Communion of Saints: between that article and that which immediately follows concerning the Remission of Sins, I think it convenient to interpose a brief consideration upon *The Power of the Keys;* the which we are directed and enjoined sometimes to discourse on, and may do it, as it seems, here most seasonably, it having so near a relation to the matter of both those articles; the Church, in which,

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by which, for which it is exercised, (by it also the Communion of Saints being maintained and preserved,) and the Remission of sins, which (especially as to be understood here) is a partial and most considerable effect or consequent of its use. For though remission of sins may be taken in its utmost latitude for all remissions indulged by God, and by what means, in what manner, upon what account soever dispensed; yet according to the intention of those who compiled the Creed, it seems principally to design that formal Remission of sins which was consigned by the Church's ministry; this being performed by virtue of a power imparted by Christ to the Church, called, as we shall see, *The Power of the Keys;* concerning which, therefore, it will be not unseasonable for us here briefly to discourse.

As God Almighty, being King and Sovereign Lord of the world, doth govern it partly by his own immediate hand of Providence, partly by the mediation of visible deputies and vicegerents constituted by him in several provinces of that his kingdom; who, receiving authority from him, are obliged under him to govern in their respective places, according to rules of justice and equity prescribed by him, to the promotion of his honour and praise of his name, to the procurement of his subjects' benefit and welfare, (consisting chiefly in their leading a safe, quiet, and commodious life here, with enjoyment of those comforts which are suitable to men's nature;) each in his province most particularly regarding the welfare of those subjects committed to his charge, yet so as withal to respect the common peace and prosperity of mankind, maintaining, so far as may be, good correspondency

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with the rest, observing the rules of justice and humanity toward all: this authority committed to them by God containing all powers necessary or conducible to those purposes; the power of making and imposing laws; of propounding and bestowing rewards; of appointing and inflicting punishments; with obligation on the subjects' part to entire obedience and submission.

In the same, or in a very like manner, doth Christ, the Head and supreme Governor of the Church, administer his spiritual kingdom; partly by the immediate direction and governance of his Holy Spirit, partly by his presidency of governors appointed by him in several provinces and societies thereof, to manage things in such order as may best conduce first to his glory and service, (as well by the propagation and enlargement of this empire, as preservation and maintenance thereof in good condition, by procuring due reverence to his person and obedience to his laws,) as may also confer to the best advantage of his subjects, and their spiritual welfare; (consisting in their being instructed in duty, and disposed to perform it, their being purified from sin, and perfected in holiness, and fitted for the possession of that eternal happiness to which they are called, designed for them;) each in his province and society (yet so as withal to respect the good of the whole body, maintaining charitable affection toward, and peaceable commerce with the rest) being particularly obliged to promote those ends; such authority including all power requisite to that purpose; of establishing fit orders and rules to be observed in their respective societies; of dispensing encouragements and inflict-

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ing penalties, agreeable to the nature of their office, and conducible to their designment; the subjects of this kingdom being obliged to obedience and compliance with those orders, to submit to those penalties and censures. Now this authority (either all or a great part of it) is commonly called *Potestas Clavium*, by a name taken from those words of our Saviour, wherein he promiseth St Peter, that he would give him *The keys of the kingdom of heaven:* concerning which promise we must first observe, that however it was made to St Peter upon a special occasion, yet the matter thereof was not peculiar and restrained to his person; for the particulars conjoined therewith, and which explain the meaning thereof, are otherwhere assigned to others, as well as him. Christ there declares, that upon him he will build his Church; and otherwise we are informed, that the Church is built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles: he promises, that what he shall bind or loose upon earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven; and the same privilege is promised otherwhere, in express terms, to any congregation or society of Christians, and in terms equivalent to a certain meeting of disciples. This privilege therefore, and authority, was by our Saviour committed to the Church; and if to the Church, then, as to its use and exercise, to the governors thereof[1], who act in behalf thereof; to whom its preservation is commended, upon whom the care of its welfare, its peace, its honour is incumbent: the which we shall at present suppose,

Matt. xvi. 19.

Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.

Matt. xviii. 18.

John xx. 23.

[1] In Beato Petro claves regni cœlorum cuncti suscepimus sacerdotes.—Ambros. [de Dign. Sac. cap. 1. Opp. Tom. II. (App.) col. 358 A.]

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and which by the nature, practice, end, and design of this power, will further appear.

At present, for the better understanding the nature and extent of this power, we will consider,

I. Its name.

II. Its object, or correlative term.

III. The equivalent phrases by which it is expressed or explained.

IV. The practice and exercise thereof.

V. The rise and occasion of its institution.

VI. The necessity and usefulness thereof. From the consideration of which particulars we may collect wherein it consists, to what it tends, how far it extends. We will touch them briefly.

I. The name *Keys*, being metaphorical, implies the thing thereby designed in its nature, or some chief property, most obvious and conspicuous, to resemble keys. Now they (as being instruments designed to no other purpose) have no other nature or property than opening or shutting the avenues or passages from one place to another; and consequently their effects being either to give entrance and admission, or to detain and keep within, or to stop the passage and exclude from a place; necessarily all or some of these actions (or somewhat answerable and like thereto) must agree to this power, in respect to that state or place which it refers to: it must be therefore a power either admissive into, or retentive within, or exclusive from, or all these together, in respect to the kingdom of heaven, whereof it is called the keys; no other reason being conceivable of its obtaining that appellation; and we see, when this metaphor is used in like cases, either all or one of these effects are by way of

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interpretation expressed; as when of the holy and true one, that is, of our Saviour, it is said in the Revelation, *He that hath the key of David;* it is subjoined, *He openeth, and none shutteth; he shutteth, and none openeth.* And when our Saviour imputes to the lawyers, that they took away the key of knowledge, he explains the meaning of his expression by adding, that they would not enter themselves, and those who were entering they hindered: and likewise in St Matthew, concerning the Scribes and Pharisees; *Ye shut the kingdom of heaven* (the same thing as here) *before men; for yourselves do not enter, nor do you suffer those that are entering.* Whence, it seems, may be collected, that this power (this having the keys) is a power of admission into, and exclusion from, the place or state which it relates to: which we must next consider; for such must this power be, as its term or object doth admit or require.

Rev. iii. 7. Luke xi. 52. Matt. xxiii. 13.

II. As to the term it relates to, *The kingdom of heaven,* that, according to the New Testament use, is capable especially of two acceptions. It, first, commonly signifies the state or constitution of Religion under the Gospel, in opposition or contradistinction to the state of things under the ancient Law. In the time of the Law, God's kingdom was in a manner earthly; the land of Israel was his dominion, in Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion; Jerusalem was his royal seat, *The city of the great King,* the temple there his palace; he governed more immediately by oracles from time to time put into the mouth of his priests and prophets, consulting him for orders and directions; he received more visible services and

Ps. cxiv. 2. lxxvi. 2; xlviii. 2.

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homages from his subjects; he granted earthly conveniences and privileges for them; he encouraged them to the obedience of his law by promises of temporal reward; deterred them from disobedience and disloyalty by threatening temporal pains and damages: but under the evangelical dispensation, as God's kingdom is more capacious and unlimited in extension, so he hath assumed no peculiar residence upon earth, nor is worshipped otherwise than as being in heaven, the natural seat of his special majesty and glory; he rules by a law perpetual and immutable, revealed from thence; the sacrifices and adorations he requires are spiritual and invisible for the most part, and addressed thither; the privileges appertaining to the subjects of this kingdom chiefly refer thither; they are allured to obedience by rewards to be conferred there; are withdrawn from disobedience by penalties referring to a future state. This state therefore of things is called the kingdom of heaven, of God, of Christ; that which was coming and approaching in the time of our Saviour's humble sojourning upon earth, is now present, he reigning in heaven, into which they are said to be translated; to have access unto the heavenly Jerusalem; to be made fellow-citizens and coheirs with the saints in light; to have their conversation in heaven; to partake a heavenly calling; to be seated together with Christ in heavenly places; who with sincere persuasion of mind embrace the doctrine of Christ, with firm resolution submit to his law, becoming thereby subjects of this heavenly kingdom, undertaking the obligations, and partaking the privileges belonging thereto: this state, I say, or relation, is thus called; or (which comes

Col. i. 12, 13.
Eph. ii. 19.
Phil. iii. 20.
Heb. iii. 1; xiii. 22.
Eph. i. 20.

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to the same thing, and makes no alteration as to the matter in hand) taking the word personally, (and concretely as it were,) the society of men put into such a state, the body of persons standing so related, that is, the Church of Christ, may be called the kingdom of heaven. This acception is so frequent and obvious, that it is needless to cite instances, or stand upon the confirmation thereof. But the phrase is also, sometime, taken for the perfection or utmost improvement of this state; that αἰώνιος βασιλεία, *Everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* as St Peter calls it; that state of glory and bliss, into which all good Christians, who shall through this temporal life persist in faithful obedience unto God, shall hereafter be received; that kingdom, into which not every one who saith Lord, Lord, (who makes an external profession or pretence,) but he that doeth the will of God, who is in heaven, shall enter. Now whereas these two states (one being a state of grace and favour with God here, the other of glory and joy with God hereafter) are in their nature, and according to their prime intention, inseparably coherent, one being subordinate to the other; that, as a step or degree, a way or tendency to this; this, a completion and consummation of that; that being supposed as precedent in order to this; this in design consequent upon that; therefore what immediately concerns one, doth by consequence respect the other: and in our case, a power to open or shut, to admit into or exclude from, the state of grace, may be supposed and said in a manner consequently to be a power of opening and shutting the state of glory hereafter; and reciprocally, both jointly may be well

2 Pet. i. 11.

Matt. vii. 21.

Acts xx. 24.

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understood in their kind and order. But since the persons to whom this power is imparted do exercise it here, (*And what thou shalt bind or loose upon earth,* saith our Saviour, implying the use of that power which he promised to communicate to St Peter;) since the immediate effects thereof are here below, therefore it seems fit, that we understand the kingdom of heaven in our case more directly and immediately the present kingdom of heaven, or state of grace into which Christians are here received, (or, if you please, the society itself of persons so instated;) though more remotely, and by consequence, it may imply the state of glory hereafter.

Matt. xvi. 19.

We should therefore consider, how these states, especially that of grace, here more immediately respected, may be opened or shut; how one man may be enabled or empowered to permit entrance, or debar others from it: and this we may conceive effectible, either by yielding some real furtherance on one side, or some effectual hindrance on the other, in respect of getting into or abiding in this state; or else by some formal act of judgment and authority, by virtue of which some are admitted to partake the rights and privileges of this state, or some excluded and rendered incapable thereof. I say, first, by real furtherance or hindrance; as on the one side, they who instruct or shew the way, who persuade, who encourage men to enter, who afford any means or opportunities, may be said to open this state; (as in like manner it is said, that *God did open to the Gentiles a door of faith;* and St Paul saith, *A great and effectual door was opened to him* at Ephesus, and another at Troas; and he exhorts the Colossians to pray, *That God would open*

Acts xiv. 27.
1 Cor. xvi. 9.
2 Cor. ii. 12.
Col. iv. 3.

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to him θύραν τοῦ λόγου, a door of preaching the mystery of Christ; where opening a door denotes ministering opportunities and advantages of performing the things specified: and on the other side, they who keep from knowing the way which leads thither, who dissuade or discourage from entering, who subtract the means or prevent opportunities of doing it, who interpose obstacles or obstructions of difficulty, danger, or damage, may be said to shut, or exclude; (thus are the Scribes said to shut the kingdom of heaven;) that is, to hinder men from embracing the doctrine, or submitting to the rule of Christ, by discouraging them from giving attention and credence to what he taught, (which is otherwhere called taking away the key of knowledge;) as also by terrifying them from acknowledgment of the truth they saw and liked, by reproaches, persecutions, and punishments laid on them who did it: thus may this state be opened and shut.

Matt. xxiii. 13.

Luke xi. 52.

As also it may be so by judicial and authoritative acts; by way of consent and approbation declared, of decision and sentence pronounced; in such manner as we duly see men admitted into, and debarred from, the state of citizens and freemen, (from enjoying in esteem and effect the capacities and immunities belonging to the members of such or such societies and corporations,) by the consent or dissent, approbation or refusal, decree or sentence, formally signified, of persons empowered to those purposes. Now regarding the nature of that state whereof we are speaking, as to real furtherance, since respect to God's glory and man's salvation obliges all men to endeavour, that

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men be brought into this state, the same being in a special manner incumbent upon the governors and pastors of the Church; therefore this may be conceived one way of opening, or one part of this power; although to shut by way of real hindrance, in the manner described, cannot properly belong to any, duty and charity forbidding really and finally to obstruct entrance into the state of grace; the Scribes and Lawyers being blamed for not suffering men (otherwise willing and disposed) to enter into the kingdom of heaven. As to the other kind of opening and shutting, by legal proceeding; as all persons, according to charitable estimation, worthy and well qualified, ought to be admitted thereinto; so neither, according to the reason of the thing itself, nor in regard to the public benefit, nor respecting the good of the persons pretending thereto, should some be permitted to enjoy the communion thereof: therefore to distinguish and separate such persons, the appointment and use of such a power is requisite. This will appear more plainly when we come to consider the necessity and utility of this power. Further,

III. For the phrases equivalent, by which, in places of the Gospel most parallel, this power is expressed and explained, they are especially those of binding and loosing, of retaining and remitting sins. As for binding and loosing; when our Saviour had promised to bestow upon St Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he signifies what effect the use of them should produce, by adding conjunctively: *And whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Matt. xvi. 19.

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Now binding may signify any kind of determination, of restraint, of detention upon persons or things; and loosing, that which is opposite thereto, the leaving indifferent, laying open, setting free of any person or thing respectively. He that (having good authority to do so) enjoins or prohibits any thing, doth bind that thing, (determining its moral quality, making it to be good or bad, lawful or unlawful,) and binds the persons concerned to observation or abstinence; he that permits the same thing to be done, or dispenses with its doing, may be said to loose: thus all laws are bonds, and are said to oblige; and the removing or suspending their force, in whole or in part, (by abrogation, or dispensation, or exception,) is consequently a loosing, or relaxation; and the power of binding and loosing thus would be a power legislative, of making and repealing laws and rules of action; and in some analogy hereto, the power (with authority and by office) of interpreting laws, that is, of determining and declaring what is commanded, what prohibited, what permitted, may be called a power of binding and loosing, (and if we believe Mr Selden, and Grotius perhaps from him, in Matt. xvi. is so commonly termed among Jewish writers). Also the exercise of any jurisdiction, the decision of any case, the warding any amends to be done, any mulct to be imposed, any punishment to be inflicted, is a binding; to which kind of binding it seems plain that place doth more particularly refer, wherein our Saviour pronounces valid the arbitration between persons in differences made by one or two friends; or (if that cannot terminate the controversy) the final judgment of the Church, concerning which he with asseveration pronounces, *Amen*,

Matt. xviii. 18.

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(*verily,*) *I say unto you, that whatsoever ye* (a Church of you my disciples) *shall* (viz. in this manner, by way of jurisdiction or arbitration) *bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven:* all your sentences and decisions (duly and impartially made) shall be valid and ratified by God himself.

Also the result of any contract is an obligation, and they who make or enter into it do bind the parties concerned, themselves and others.

Moreover, the detaining any how under one's power or disposal, is binding; and the setting free thence, a loosing answerable thereto; *Ought not,* saith our Saviour, *this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?* That which is here called bound by Satan is otherwhere expressed by καταδυναστεύεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου, being under the power and dominion of the Devil. Also binding may imply detaining in any present condition; as suppose a condition of guilt, of disfavour, of obnoxiousness to wrath and punishment, either positively, by keeping on the shackles which hold them, or negatively, by withdrawing the means of getting out; and correspondently, loosing is a freeing from such a state, by removing the causes which hindered, or applying the means which procure liberty.

Luke xiii. 16.

Acts x. 38.

And to this last sense the other equivalent phrase (used in St John, of retaining and remitting of sins) doth seem to refer; *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained;* that is, whomsoever ye shall think fit to detain in a state of guilt, to refuse pardon and reconcilement

John xx. 23.

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unto, they shall continue in such state, they shall rest deprived of those benefits; whomsoever ye shall judge worthy to be absolved from guilt, and received unto favour, they shall effectually be pardoned and reconciled in God's sight; your act, in respect to that remission or retention, shall be approved and ratified in heaven*.

Now from these considerations concerning the name of this power, and the term or object thereof, and of the phrases in some measure equivalent to that whereby it is expressed, although we may probably infer somewhat concerning the nature thereof, yet the perfect nature and full extent thereof seems best deducible from that which we must next consider.

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* [Now they (the pastors of the Church) may be understood to remit, or retain sins divers ways.

1. They remit sins *dispositivè*, by working in persons fit dispositions, upon which remission of sins, by God's promise, is consequent; the dispositions of faith and repentance.

2. They remit (or retain sins) *declarativè;* as the ambassadors of God, in his name pronouncing the word of reconciliation to the penitent, and denouncing wrath to the obstinate in sin.

3. They remit sins *impetrativè;* obtaining pardon for sins by their prayers; according to that of St James: *Is any sick among you? let him call the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him,—and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* James v. 14, 15.

4. They remit sins *dispensativè*, by consigning pardon in administration of the Sacrament; especially in conferring Baptism, whereby duly administered and undertaken, all sins are washed away; and in the absolving of penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by imposition of hands: the which St Paul calls χαρίζεσθαι, to bestow grace, or favour on the penitent.]

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IV. The practice and exercise of this power; which being by our Saviour committed to his Church, and to the Apostles as governors thereof, and acting in its behalf, we cannot suppose they would act beyond or beside it. What we see them (in way of office and authority) doing, applicable and agreeable to the meaning of those words, as hitherto in some sort explained, we may well believe done by virtue of this power so expressly by our Lord bestowed on them: and the like we may reasonably suppose concerning the Churches nearly succeeding to their times, that what they generally practised in way of government was by authority, not arbitrarily assumed to themselves, but derived from Christ's donation and appointment, declared to be so, directed and determined to particular use by the Apostles, when they planted and settled each Church.

Now for the Apostles' practice; we find, (first)
Acts ii. 14, &c. xx. 18, &c. as to the opening part of this power, that they did with great earnestness and diligence labour to bring men into the kingdom of heaven by instruction, invitation, and persuasion, not sparing any pains, not regarding any difficulty, not shun-
20, 21. ning any danger for the effecting hereof; *Not* (to use St Paul's words in the Acts) *keeping back anything that was profitable, but shewing and teaching them publicly, and from house to house, thoroughly testifying both to Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ:* that having thus induced men, and qualified them to enter, (by entertaining the doctrine of Christ, and resolution to live according thereto,) they did actually admit them into this state by a solemn act, containing a

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symbolical representation of the nature of this state, with the benefits and privileges accompanying it; declaring the persons so admitted to be received into a state of entire favour with God, to be freed from all precedent guilt, to have all their sins remitted and blotted out, to be redeemed from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ, God's beloved Son: that by constant exhortation to perseverance and progress in faith and obedience, against all temptations, persecutions, and seductions, in St Paul's words, *Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that they might present* (or *render*) *every man perfect in Christ Jesus,* they did endeavour to preserve and retain men in this state: that when men, being overborne by temptation of the flesh or persecution of the world, or seduced by the cunning of false teachers, did decline, and were in danger of deserting the profession or practice agreeable to this state, they did labour zealously to reclaim, and resettle them therein; and that such having fallen from it of themselves, or having been (by reason of their scandalous and contagious practice) in way of censure and punishment removed from it, they were ready, upon their repentance sufficiently declared, to receive and restore them, reinstating them in their former condition, and remitting their offences; *If any man,* saith St Paul, *be prevented in a transgression, ye that are spiritual,* καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον, *restore* (*re-establish,* set in a right and entire state) *such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted:* and, *If any one doth not obey our words—mark such an one, and do not converse with him, that he may be ashamed: however do not account him an enemy,*

Acts ii. 38; iii. 19. Col. i. 12, 13, &c.

Col. i. 28.

Gal. vi. 1.

2 Thess. iii. 14, 15.

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but admonish him as a brother. And more plainly, St Paul enjoins the Corinthians to account a punishment imposed upon a grievous offender sufficient; that they should favour (or indulge with, or forgive) and comfort him, lest he should be swallowed up with grief; that they should confirm love toward him; declaring, that what favour they should shew in such cases, he should consent and comply with them therein. And he otherwhere tells us, that the power he had bestowed upon him by Christ, according to which he might, upon occasion, use persons severely, was for edification, and not for destruction; that the extremest punishment inflicted (delivery to Satan, from whose dominion they were by entrance into Christ's kingdom freed) was for destruction of the flesh, *That the spirit might be saved in the day of judgment,* and, *That they might learn not to blaspheme;* intimating a restitution into this state by repentance. And lastly, whereas St Paul advises Timothy not to lay suddenly his hands upon any man, nor (thereby) to partake with other men's sins; he seems to intimate the practice of receiving offenders into full communion of the Church, and re-admittance into this state, signified by that ceremonious action. Thus did the Apostles use the power of the keys on one hand; opening, and admitting, and keeping within the state of grace.

2 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 10.

2 Cor. xiii. 10.

1 Cor. v. 5.

1 Tim. i. 20.

1 Tim. v. 22.

We also shall find them shutting and excluding from it, by refusing and rejecting such as were not worthy and well disposed for it[m]; withdrawing the means of instruction and persuasion; not casting their pearls to swine: shaking the dust off their feet, when men (as it is in the

Matt. vii. 6. Acts xiii. 46, 51; xviii. 6.

[m] Εὔθετος εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Luke ix. 62.

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Acts) did thrust away the word of God, and did not judge themselves worthy of eternal life. We find them also exercising authority upon such as were admitted; dealing severely with persons walking disorderly in any kind of lewd and vicious practice, disobeying their words and orders, making divisions and scandals, breathing false and bad doctrines, contrary to that which they had taught; such they enjoin Christians to decline from, and avoid all communion and conversation with them; such, as bad leaven, they command to be purged out from the Christian congregations, to be taken from among them, to be delivered up to Satan. Thus did they shut the kingdom of heaven; and so, according to their example and order, (as we should in reason suppose,) did the governors of the Christian Church after them both open and shut it; opening it by Baptism, (which the Fathers sometime expressly call κλεὶς οὐρανῶν, *The key of heaven,*) and receiving persons well instructed and well disposed into it; opening it again by receiving persons who had been for heinous offences put out, upon due testification and reasonable assurance of their amendment and repentance; and shutting it upon persons unfit to enter, separating and excluding from it such as notoriously misbehaved themselves therein, to the dishonour, disturbance, and detriment of the Church. I cannot insist upon particulars, nor stand to produce testimonies concerning them; let one clear passage (as to the latter part, shutting) out of Tertullian's *Apologetic,* wherein he declares the manner commonly practised in the Christian Churches, suffice: *Certe,* saith he, *fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus,*

Rom. xvi. 17, &c.

1 Cor. v. 5.

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fiduciam figimus, disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus. Ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina. Nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu, summumque futuri judicii præjudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis, et conventus, et omnis sancti commercii relegetur[n].

V. As for the rise and occasion of this power, (beside the necessity and utility thereof, which might cause it to be appointed,) we may consider, that as all, or the greater part, of institutions and ceremonies practised among Christians, as the whole frame of government in their Churches, seem to have been drawn from, or according to, the pattern of God's ancient Church, (Christianity not affecting novelty or difference from that, but so far as consisted with its main design of reforming men's minds, and promoting the spiritual service of God, and suited with reason or expediency, endeavouring conformity to it, and resemblance thereof;) so it seems our Saviour, in this particular, did but accommodate and vest in the governors of his Church a power used in that of the Jews; for we shall find this power in its several parts not only represented in type, but expressed in direct and real practice. We see, that the Jewish Church was opened to proselytes by circumcision, by washing, by expiatory sacrifices; that unclean and leprous persons were excluded from the camp and congregation, prohibited contact and conversation, that they might not annoy or infect those which were pure and sound; that upon their

Levit. xiii. xiv. Numb. v. 2.

[n] [Cap. 39. Opp. p. 31 A.]

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recovery and purification they were restored to society and conversation; that that Church was wholly shut upon enormous offenders, (such who could not be kept in order, who presumptuously neglected some great duty, or violated some great commandment, who disgraced the Religion by scandalous practice, or disturbed the peace by contumacious carriage, refusing to hear the judge and the priest;) that, I say, such persons were quite shut out by total extermination and excision. We find also several degrees of ecclesiastical censure (answerable to the degrees of offence) practised among them, alluded to in the New Testament; separating from communion and converse, exclusion from the synagogue, anathematizing or imprecating, and devoting to God's judgment: the practice of which things being grounded in reason, and suitable to the state of the Christian Church, (as well as to that of the Jews,) and conducible to the welfare thereof, it is no wonder a power of doing the like was granted unto the Christian Church, and exercised by the superintendents thereof. But these things I cannot stand to pursue minutely and distinctly.

Vid. Ezra x. 8.

Lukevi.22. John xi.55; xii. 42. Gal. i. 8, 9, &c.

VI. I should, lastly, consider the necessity and usefulness of this power; how necessary and conducible it is to promote the ends of Christian Religion; to preserve the honour of the Church and of its governors; to secure the members thereof from contagion and bad manners and influences of bad example; to maintain good order and peace; to restrain from offending, and reform them that shall offend; and to the like

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purposes. But I shall leave this point to your further consideration.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

That it is the natural condition of mankind to lie under a violent proclivity (or rather an unavoidable necessity) of frequently transgressing the plainest dictates of reason, the surest rules of equity, however fortified by the authority of God himself, commanding and requiring duty, promising reward, and threatening punishment, continual experience shews; that hereby men do not only much disgrace and abuse themselves, (doing against the dignity of their nature and their own particular welfare,) but highly injure, dishonour, and ill requite God, (their Maker, their natural Lord, their Benefactor, from whom they have received their being, under whose power they wholly are, to whom they owe all their good, and consequently to whom all obedience, respect, and gratitude is due from them,) is also manifest; their own consciences will tell them so much; their own reason will therefore condemn them, that hereby they are involved in a state of guilt and debt, become obnoxious to the just wrath and vengeance of God[a], beyond all possibility of making (by themselves) any reparation or satisfaction; (for they are more apt to incur new, than able to make amends for old, blame; to accumulate more than to discharge foregoing debts;) that hence they must fall into a condition of restless fear and inextricable perplexity of mind, dreading the effects of divine justice and vengeance sometime to come upon

Deut. xxxii. 6.

[a] Ὑπόδικοι.—Rom. iii. 19.

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them; that there cannot in reality be any other relief or deliverance from this distress than from the benignity of God disposing him to bear patiently, to forgive mercifully these offences; nor in their apprehension any such relief, (any freedom from such discomfort and anxiety,) than from a plain signification of God's being so graciously disposed, is also clear from the same light. Now of such a disposition in God (to be appeased and to pardon offences) we find a general presumption among those who have had any knowledge or opinion concerning God, (drawn, I suppose, partly from primitive tradition, partly from experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance to bestow, the common benefits of Providence upon offenders, partly from an opinion that bounty and clemency are perfections and excellencies worthy of God; or, lastly, from a natural inclination in men[p] (necessary to that quiet and comfort of their minds) to flatter themselves with pleasing hopes;) we find, I say, such a general presumption concerning God's disposition to be reconcileable and merciful to offenders, especially upon their acknowledgment of guilt and need of favour, together with a declaration of their willingness to make him such amends, as they are able to do: such a presumption to have been, that universal custom of presenting sacrifices and oblations to God doth sufficiently shew; which implied in them who presented them a confession of guilt to be expiated, of punishment to be deserved, (such as was represented in the destruction of a living creature,) as also a desire of

[p] Testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ.—Tertull. [Apol. cap. 17. Opp. p. 17 A.]

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making satisfaction, (intimated by their cheerful parting with somewhat dear and valuable to them;) upon which considerations of humble acknowledgment, of willingness to satisfy, in a manner so signal and solemn declared, they did hope God's wrath would be appeased, and his judgments averted from them. Such, it seems, was the common presumption of mankind; which yet could not satisfy or quiet the minds of them who should consider, that as such performances could not really take away guilt, nor sufficiently repair those inestimable wrongs and affronts put upon God, so God had never plainly declared his intention to consider or accept them; so that in effect their opinion was somewhat unreasonable, and their hope groundless. This observation I propound, as yielding a good argument (the general consent of mankind) to prove, that the doctrine (concerning remission of sins obtainable from God) is a fundamental point and a principal part of all Religion, and that yet (as to any solid and certain ground of believing or hoping it) it is peculiar to Christian Religion, God never before the revelation (evangelical) having clearly and fully signified, that he would pardon offences (at least all of them, heinous and presumptuous offences) committed against him. What God would have done he had taught partly by a natural law and light implanted in every man's soul, partly by express promulgation made to the patriarchs of old, and derived to posterity from them by tradition; how men in respect thereto
Rom. ii. 15. behaved themselves, their conscience (accusing or excusing them) could testify; but how, in case of transgressing those dictates and laws, he would

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deal with them, he never plainly had discovered. Indeed the Jewish dispensation (which was particular and preparatory to Christianity) did appoint and accept expiations for some lesser faults committed out of ignorance and infirmity; but did not pretend to justify from all things, (as St Paul in the Acts speaks,) nor promise or give hope of pardon upon any terms for great presumptuous sins committed wilfully with a high hand; it rather threatens an indelible continuance of guilt upon, an extreme and inevitable vengeance against the perpetrators of them; *The soul,* saith the Law, *that doeth presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off,* (by God's special providence;) *his iniquity shall be upon him.* And we know how solemn and dreadful imprecations were pronounced against not only the transgressors of some particular laws, but generally against all those who did not continue in all things written in the Law to do them: so that the remission tendered by Moses was of a very narrow extent, and such as could hardly exempt any man from obligation to and fear of punishment. Indeed, to prevent utter despair, and that which is naturally consequent thereupon, a total neglect of duty, God was pleased by his prophets among that people occasionally to intimate something of further grace reserved; and that he was willing (upon condition of humble and sincere repentance) to receive even those, who were guilty of the highest offences, to mercy. But these discoveries, as they were special and extraordinary, so

Numb. xv. 27, &c.

Acts xiii. 39.

Numb. xv. 30, 31.

Deut. xxvii. 26. Gal. iii. 10.

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were they further preparatory to the Gospel, and as dawnings to that bright day of grace, which did by Christ spread its comfortable light over the world, revealing to mankind a general capacity of God's favour, (procured in a manner admirable and strange,) obtainable by means declared, upon terms propounded therein.

Luke i. 77, 78. 2 Cor. vi. 2.

Thereby is fully and clearly manifested to us, how God, in free mercy and pity to us, (all our works being unworthy of any acceptance, all our sacrifices unfit in the least part to satisfy for our offences,) was pleased himself to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly well-pleasing to him, (imputable to us as performed by one of our kind and race, and apt to appease God's just wrath against such a generation of rebels;) to provide a sacrifice in nature so pure, in value so precious, as might be perfectly satisfactory for our offences: in regard to which obedience God is become reconciled, and opens his arms of grace to mankind; in respect to which sacrifice he tenders remission to all men that upon his terms (most equal and easy terms) are willing to embrace it. This is the great doctrine, so peculiar to the Gospel, from whence especially it hath its name, from whence it is styled *The gospel of grace;* this is *The good tidings of great joy to all people,* which the Angel first preached at our Saviour's birth, which the Apostles were ordained to preach and testify unto all nations, as the main point of Christian Religion, (that in our Saviour's name *Repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations;*) that *God had exalted him to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance*

Luke i. 77. Acts xx. 24. Luke ii. 10. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts v. 31; xiii. 38. 1 John ii. 12.

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unto Israel, and remission of sins; (to give repentance, that is, to give μετανοίας τόπον, i. e. a room for repentance in order to mercy, to make it acceptable and available for the remission of sins:) *God,* saith St Paul, *did conclude all men under disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all: All men have sinned, and are come short of the glory of God: But we are justified freely by his grace, by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath propounded a propitiatory, by faith in his blood, for the demonstration of his righteousness, toward the forgiveness of forepast offences.* In which words of St Paul all things concerning the subject of our present discourse are expressed or implied: the nature of it, (freeing us from guilt, and rendering us just in God's sight;) the causes whence it sprang; the external impulsive in respect of God, or occasion thereof, our necessity and misery; the internal impulsive, God's grace and free goodness; also the meritorious cause procuring it, (our Saviour's obedience and suffering, whereby he did make atonement for our sins;) the ends whither it tends, (the demonstration of God's goodness and his justice, or of his merciful justice, signified by the word δικαιοσύνη;) the terms and condition, upon compliance with or performance of which the effect of it should follow, (faith; that is, a sincere embracement or hearty persuasion concerning the truth of that doctrine or revelation which offered it, implying also a firm resolution to submit to the yoke of Christ, and obey his righteous laws;) lastly, the means of conveying, declaring, and confirming it, (implied by the words, πάρεσις προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, *The remission of*

Heb. xii. 17.

Rom. xi. 32. Gal. iii. 22. Rom. iii. 23—25.

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forepast sins; such as was solemnly exhibited, signified, ratified in the Church-ministries of Baptism, absolution, and reconciliation, upon penance and confession, especially the first). These things I cannot insist upon particularly or distinctly, nor do much need to do so, having had occasion to consider most of them formerly in these discourses, especially when we spake concerning the salvation procured by Jesus, the sacerdotal office of Christ, the death and passion of our Saviour. I shall therefore only now briefly touch (that which seems here specially referred to) the ordinary manner of conveying this great grace to men by the ministry of the Church. To which purpose we may consider, that although it be true, that God generally propounds remission of sins (upon account of our Saviour's performances and in his name) to all that truly repent and turn unto him, that he chiefly grants it upon this consideration, nor withholds it from any upon the blameless default of any other performance; yet he requires, (and to comply with his will therein is part of duty, which the repentance mentioned disposes to and is declared by,) God requires, I say, (as well for the public edification and the honour of the Church, as for the comfort and advantage of the persons more immediately concerned herein,)

Acts xxvi. 20; iii. 19.

1 That this repentance be publicly declared and approved by the Church; that this remission be solemnly and formally imparted by the hands of God's ministers, declared by express words, or ratified by certain seals, and signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. Thus hath every man, (upon declaration of his real faith

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and repentance, to the satisfaction of the Church,) being admitted to Baptism, the entire forgiveness of his sins, and reception into God's favour, consigned unto him therein, confirmed and represented by a visible sign, shewing, that as by water the body is washed and cleansed from adherent filth, so by the grace then imparted the souls of them, upon whom that mystical rite is performed, are cleared from the guilts that stained it, their sins are wiped out, (it is St Peter's expression in the Acts,) their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, (as it is in the Epistle of the Hebrews,) they are saved, (or put into a state of salvation, as St Peter assures us).

Acts ii. 38; iii. 19.

Acts iii. 19.

Heb. x. 22.

1 Pet. iii. 21.

2 Likewise, if Christian men having fallen into sin, or failed of duty toward God, do seriously confess their fault, and heartily repent thereof; when the ministers of the Church, in God's name and for Christ's sake, do declare (or pronounce) to them so doing or so qualified the pardon of their sin, and absolve them from it; we need not doubt, that their sins are really forgiven, and the pardon expressed in words is effectually dispensed unto them.

3 Moreover, if persons having committed notorious enormities, adjudged of a deadly and destructive nature, (*Sins unto death*, St John calls them,) inconsistent with the state of grace, and scandalous to the Christian profession, are therefore justly secluded from communion of the Church; when upon submission to the penances enjoined, and satisfactory demonstrations of repentance, they are resumed into the bosom of the Church, we may be assured that, (according to the Catholic resolution against the Novatians,) supposing the repent-

1 John v. 16.

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ance true and real, their sins are remitted, and they restored to a state of grace. For since God hath expressly declared, that *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all God's statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him—he shall save his soul alive—iniquity shall not be his ruin:* that *If we wash ourselves, and make ourselves clean, and put away the evil of our doings from God's eyes, and cease to do evil—though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool:* since God delights not in the death of any sinner, but rather desires that all men should be saved: since our Saviour intimates the satisfaction he hath in finding the sheep, that had erred from his fold, and God is so highly pleased with the return of a prodigal son (that had spent abroad all his sustenance in riot) home to his house: since our Saviour's performances are in value and virtue sufficient to expiate for the greatest offences, to redeem the most grievous sinners; so that *If any man sin, he hath,* upon due repentance, *an advocate with the Father:* since the design of such punishments inflicted upon offenders respects edification, not destruction, and procures the ruin of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved: these things, I say, being considered, the Church (to which the public and ordinary dispensation of God's grace, according to the dispositions and conditions which he hath declared to require in order to men's becoming capable thereof, is committed) hath sufficient warrant to receive such persons into a state of grace and reconciliation with God; so

Ezek. xviii. 21, 22, 27, 30.

Isai. i. 16, 17, 18.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

Matt. xviii. 13.

Luke xv. 4—7.

1 John ii. 1.

2 Cor. xiii. 10.

1 Cor. v. 5.

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that we need not doubt, but whose sins they shall thus remit, shall in effect (according to our Saviour's word) be remitted; whom they shall thus absolve on earth, they shall be absolved in heaven. But these things I have formerly touched in discoursing upon the Power of the Keys; I shall only add a few words concerning the use and practical influence of this point, being believed and considered, should have upon us. And, John xxi. 23. Matt. xviii. 18.

1 It should engage us to admire the goodness of God, and with grateful hearts to praise him for it. If we should offer the highest injuries, affronts, and despites to the majesty of an earthly prince among us, (so infinitely inferior to that of God,) we should have reason to admire his goodness and clemency, did he pass them over; did he not with extreme severity avenge them. There can be no higher than those we have offered to Almighty God, (none capable in any comparison of such aggravations:) how unexpressibly great therefore is his goodness, that freely offers us pardon; that earnestly invites and intreats us to accept it; that hath been at such an expense, and condescended so low, to purchase for us the means thereof! It is ὑπερβάλλουσα χάρις, *An excessive grace of God;* ὑπερβάλλων πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος, *An excessive riches of grace;* ἀνεκδιήγητος δωρεά, *an unutterable gift of God,* as St Paul speaketh. Let us consider our state, and the nature of God, with the aggravations of our offences grounded on them, and we shall in some measure perceive it so, and what thankfulness we are consequently obliged to render. 2 Cor. ix. 14. Eph. ii. 7. 2 Cor. ix. 15.

2 It should beget in us, as grateful respect, so ardent love to God, in proportion to the favour we

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have received. It was his love that moved him to
Eph. ii. 4, 5. forgive us our sins, (*God being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, did quicken us with Christ, who were dead in trespasses and sins*). And to this love of pity in God, should answer a love of reverence in us toward so gracious a Lord. Our Saviour, you know, propounds the question to St Peter concerning two debtors, of whom one did owe fifty, the other five hundred pence; and both
Luke vii. 41, 43, 47 being forgiven by the creditor, whom he thought of the two should love him most: he answers, according to the plain dictate of nature, *He to whom most was forgiven;* and our Saviour approves his answer with an ὀρθῶς ἔκρινας, *Thou hast judged rightly:* and the holy penitent, (Mary Magdalene,) *Because many sins were forgiven her, therefore did love much.* So doth reason and example oblige us to do.

3 It affords matter of comfort to us; a comfortable sense of mercy conferred, a comfortable hope
Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. of mercy to be obtained; *Blessed is he,* saith the Psalmist, *whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned; blessed is the man unto whom the Lord*
Rom. v. 1, *imputeth not iniquity: Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* All good Christians are in this blessed state, and may enjoy a delightful satisfaction in reflecting thereupon, able to support them against all other occasions of sorrow or displeasure that may befal them; and it will fortify us against despair, to consider, that however God hath been offended by our sins, he will be appeased by our
Isa. xliv. 22. repentance; so that our sins shall be blotted out and vanish as a thick cloud, which passing away
1 John ii. 1. leaves a serene sky behind it; *If any man sin, we have an advocate,* &c.

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4 It is also an engagement to obedience; *Behold*, said our Saviour to the diseased man, *thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee.* Having obtained a cure and state of health by God's grace, we by relapsing into sin expose ourselves to greater danger, we incur deeper guilt. Our state, though not wholly desperate, becomes very perilous. It is better continuing in the ship, than committing our safety to a plank[q]. John v. 14.

5 Lastly, the consideration of this point will shew us how much we are obliged (in conformity and compliance with God) to bear with and forgive the offences or injuries done against us. You know how strongly our Saviour presses the consideration of God's free pardon bestowed on us to this purpose; how he sets out the unreasonableness and disingenuity of them which are hardhearted toward their brethren and fellow-servants in this case; how he threatens unavoidable severity toward those who do not from their hearts forgive their brethren their trespasses, and promises remission of sins to them who (according to what they in their prayers profess themselves to do) shall forgive to men the offences committed against them; making it not only an indispensable condition, but, as it were, a means of obtaining God's mercy and favour. But I leave it to your meditation to make further profitable deductions from this point. So I proceed: Matt. xviii. 6, 33. Matt. xviii. 35; vi. 14.

[q] Pœnitentia tabula post naufragium.—Tertull. [Probably a quotation from memory of the passage: Eam (pœnitentiam) tu peccator, ita invade, ita amplexare, ut naufragus alicujus tabulæ fidem.—De Pœnit. cap. 4. Opp. p. 122 D.]

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The Resurrection of the Body[r].

The immortality or surviving of the soul after death (as being a foundation of receiving reward and punishment for men's deeds in this life) hath been in all Religions, (except perchance, that of the ancient Jews[s], which propounded great rewards and punishments in this life, assuring that providence which dispensed them by sensible experiments;) hath been, I say, almost in all Religions deemed a necessary principle, as the most potent excitement to virtue, the most powerful determent from wickedness, the most satisfactory ground of resolving difficulties concerning the nature and providence of God; which general consent, (running through all ancient Religions, according to that of Cicero[t], *Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium,*) argueth it not only agreeable to common reason, but deduced from original tradition; without which (considering the variable dispositions and capacities of mankind) it is hard to conceive so many nations should unanimously conspire in an opinion of that nature (so removed from sense) however reasonable. Indeed the philosophers, men affecting to soar above the pitch of vulgar apprehension, and who, perceiving the great superstition and vanity inmixed with common Religions, (as they had been by fraud and folly corrupted, and become degenerate from primitive tradition,) did not scruple to call any thing

[r] Τῆς σαρκός, *of the flesh*, as it is in the Greek; which comes to the same.

[s] But they afterwards found it necessary to suppose this point; when they found the most pious obnoxious to greatest afflictions.—Vid. Maccab.

[t] Tusc. Quæst. I. [16, 36.]

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delivered in them to question, and to determine about them according to reasons offering themselves, did differ herein; yet so as scarce any, who acknowledged a Divinity, (having made and governing the world, and to whom therefore reverence and service from men was due) did not approve and assert it; as, indeed, they must needs do in consonance to their opinion concerning God, all arguments upon which Religion is built, inferring it; which they did endeavour further to confirm by reasons drawn from the nature of man, which you may see collected and elegantly urged by Cicero in the first of his *Tusculan Questions:* which arguments yet we may perceive had not so great an efficacy either upon him or upon Socrates himself, (the first great promoter of this doctrine, as deducible from reason,) that they were thoroughly confident of its truth, and freed from all doubt concerning it. The certainty thereof we owe to Christianity alone, and to his instruction *Who* 2 Tim. i. 10. *brought life and immortality* (that is, immortal life) *to light:* it plainly teaches us, that when we die, we shall not wholly perish like brute beasts, (or other natural bodies, when they are dissolved;) that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles; but return into God's hand, and the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. This Christianity teacheth us; and not only so, but further, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, and our souls shall be reunited to them, and our persons restored to their perfect integrity of nature: the bringing of which effects to pass, by

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the divine power, is called most commonly *The resurrection of the dead* (or *from the dead*, ἐκ νεκρῶν) and simply *The resurrection:* sometimes *The regeneration*, (or iterated nativity,) and *being born from the dead;* which names plainly imply a respect to the body, and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and soul; the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not be called (with any propriety or truth) a resurrection: that which had never fallen could not be said to be raised up; that which did never die could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again, but in respect to that part, or that state, which had fallen, and ceased to be: and as to be born at first signifies the production and union of the parts essential to a man, body and soul; so to be born again implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man becoming thereby the same entire person which he was before. The same is also sometimes signified in terms more formal and express; *The quickening of the dead; The vivification of our mortal bodies; The redemption of our body; This corruptible* (τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο, *this very same corruptible*) *putting on immortality; Those which are in the graves hearing Christ's voice, and proceeding forth to resurrection of life or judgment; The awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth; The sea, the death, the hell* (or universal grave) *yielding up their dead:* which expressions, and the like, occurring, most clearly and fully prove the restitution of the body, and its reunion with the soul, and the person becoming in substance completely the same that he was: which truth of all perhaps which Christianity revealed, as most

Matt. xix. 28. Col. i. 18. Rev. i. 5.

Rom. iv. 17; viii. 11, 23. 2 Cor. v. 2, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 53. John v. 28. Dan. xii. 2. Rev. xx. 13.

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new and strange, was the hardliest received, and found most opposition among the Heathens, especially philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked; others said, We will hear thee again about this:* so was St Paul's discourse entertained among the Athenians: some derided it, as (it seems) conceiving it a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen; they did not see how it could, why it should be done (as Pliny, somewhere counting the revocation of the dead to life a thing impossible to be performed[u], otherwhere a childish foppery to suppose it[x].) But why it should be impossible to the divine power no good reason can be assigned. To recollect the dispersed parts of a man's body; to dispose them into their due order; to reduce them unto a temper fit to serve vital functions; to rejoin the soul unto the body so restored; why should it be impossible, why seem hard to him, who first framed and tempered our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it; yea to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him that into a dead lump of earth inserted such varieties of life; that from seeds buried in the ground, and corrupted there, causes such goodly plants to spring forth; that hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death; every morning (as it were) and every spring representing a general resurrection? *Ah Lord God!* saith the Prophet Jeremiah, *thou hast made the heaven and the earth*

Acts xvii. 32.

1 Cor. xv. 36, &c.

Jer. xxxii. 17.

[u] Nat. Hist. II. 7. [The passage is given at length, Vol. VI. p. 341.]

[x] VII. 55. [Puerilium ista deliramentorum, avidæque nunquam desinere mortalitatis commenta sunt.]

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by thy great power and stretched-out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee: too hard for omniscient wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent strength to execute. And what difficulties soever fancy may suggest, can we doubt of that to be possible which experience shews us to be done? Let that passage in the Prophet Ezekiel suffice, concerning very dry bones scattered about in an open field, which at God's word came together, and united in order; the sinews and the flesh coming upon them, and the skin covering them; and lastly, breath coming into them, so that they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army; whether we suppose it to be a parable or a history, to relate to the last resurrection or not, it implies yet a possibility of such a resurrection, and yields a lively resemblance thereof: but more plainly do many instances of particular resurrections, for the confirmation of our faith recorded in Scripture; *Women,* saith the author to the Hebrews, *received their dead by resurrection;* relating to the widow of Sarepta's child, who by Elias's prayer did revive; and the Shunammite's child raised by Elisha: to which might be added the man, who being let down into Elisha's sepulchre, and touching the bones of that Prophet, did revive and stand upon his feet: and in the New Testament we have likewise divers examples of persons by our Saviour raised and restored from death to life, Jairus's daughter, the young man of Nain, Lazarus, (who had been four days dead, in which time bodies come to putrefy and smell;) and more remarkably it is said in St Matthew's Gospel, that at our Saviour's death, *The tombs were opened, and many bodies*

Ezek. xxxvii. 1, &c.

Heb. xi. 35.

1 Kings xvii. 23.

2 Kings iv. 36.

2 Kings xiii. 21.

Matt. ix. 25.

Luke vii. 14.

John xi. 39.

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of saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs after our Saviour's resurrection, entered into the holy city, and did appear to many, (or publicly, *to the many,* τοῖς πολλοῖς;) a clear and full experiment of a miraculous resurrection, like to that we believe; but above all, our Saviour's resurrection may confirm our faith herein, it being designed to that purpose, πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν, *God holding forth,* saith St Paul, *a convincing argument to all of the resurrection,* (and other appendant verities taught in the Gospel,) *raising him up from the dead:* and *If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some that there is no resurrection of the dead?* how can any man deny that to be possible which is so really exemplified? Nay, how can we doubt that we shall follow, when we see him going before, as *The Captain of life,* as our *Forerunner,* as *The firstfruits of them that sleep,* and *Firstborn from the dead,* as that second Adam, whom it is congruous that we should all conform to in the restitution of our nature, as we did to the first Adam in the decay thereof; that we should live by him, as we died by the other; and bear the image of the heavenly immortal man, as we did that of the earthly and mortal one?

Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. Acts xvii. 31, 32. 1 Cor. xv. 12. Heb. ii. 10; vi. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. Col. i. 18.

Neither (as not impossible so) can this resurrection be shewed improbable, or implausible, but rather very consonant to the reason of the thing. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; those parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (it seems by their unwillingness to part) to cohabit, communicate, and co-operate with each

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other: many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunction, concurrence; many capacities of joy and comfort (with their contraries) result thence: the separation of them we see how violent and repugnant it is to nature; and we are taught, that it is penal, and a consequent of sin; and therefore cannot be good and perfect. No wonder then, that God designing to restore man to his ancient integrity, and more, to a higher perfection, to reward him with all the felicity his nature is capable of, (on one hand, I mean; as on the other hand to punish and afflict him, according to his demerit,) should raise the body, and rejoin it to the soul, that it might contribute its natural subserviency to such enjoyments and sufferings respectively: not to omit the congruity in justice, that the bodies which did partake in works of obedience and holiness, or of disobedience and profaneness, (which, in St Paul's language, were either *Slaves to impurity and iniquity*, or *Servants of righteousness unto sanctification*,) should also partake in suitable recompenses; that the body which endured grievous pains for righteousness should enjoy comfortable refreshments; that which wallowed in unlawful pleasures should undergo just torments.

Rom. vi. 19.

I omit (the time so requiring) many considerations pertinent to this purpose; I shall only add, what we further learn in Scripture (which also the reason of the thing would teach us) concerning this point, that as the bodies of men shall be raised the same in substance, so they shall be much altered in quality: for whereas, according to their present temper and frame, our bodies are frail and weak,

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apt by every small impression upon them to be broken or impaired, needing continual reparation, and, notwithstanding all means used to preserve them, growing to decay and dissolution; and whereas they are destined, after their resurrection, to a continual abiding in joy or pain, it is necessary they should be so changed, as they may be fit, without decay, to enjoy those everlasting comforts; able, without dissolution, to undergo those endless pains: and particularly, further, whereas the body here doth clog the soul, doth excite troublesome passions, doth incline to sensual desire, doth require much care to preserve and please it; such things being inconsistent with, or prejudicial to, that state of spiritual rest and joy which good men are destined to; a change must needs be made therein, preventive of such inconveniences; for, as St Paul saith, *Flesh and blood* (a body so brittle and passible, so apt to be affected by, so addicted to, sensible goods) *cannot enter into the kingdom of God; nor can corruption inherit incorruption; but this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; the dead must be raised incorruptible;* there must be a very sudden mutation, (so St Paul in several places expressly tells us,) a metamorphosis into a resemblance with Christ's glory; a transfiguration of our vile body into conformity with his glorious body: our body is sown in corruption, it shall be raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual. But so much concerning the resurrection: I proceed to that which follows thereupon.

1 Cor. xv. 50, 53, 54.

1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Phil. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.

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Life everlasting.

The immediate consequent of the resurrection, common to just and unjust, is (as we have it in the catalogue of fundamental doctrines, set down by
Heb. vi. 2. the Apostle to the Hebrews) κρίμα αἰώνιον, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal state of every
2 Cor. v. 10. person is determined; accordingly *Every man must bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil.* Now this state, generally taken, (as respecting both the righteous and blessed, the wicked and miserable,) as it doth suppose a perpetual duration in being and sense, so it may be called *Everlasting life;* although life (as being commonly apprehended a principal good, and all men having naturally a strong desire to preserve it, with reference also
Deut. v. 33. perhaps to the phrases used under the Law, wherein continuance in life is proposed as a reward to the obedient, and death threatened to transgressors) is used to denote peculiarly the blessed state; as death (the most extreme of legal punishments, and most abominable to nature) is also used to signify
John v. 29. Matt. xxv. 46. Dan. xii. 2. the condition of the damned; the resurrection of life, and resurrection of damnation; everlasting life and everlasting punishment, (shame and everlasting contempt,) being opposed; although, I say, life be commonly thus taken, (as is also the
Phil. iii. 11. Luke xx. 35. resurrection sometimes for that which belongs only to the righteous, transmitting them into happiness,) yet the reason of the thing requires, that here we understand it generally, so as to comprehend both states, (both being matters of faith equally necessary, as it were, and of like

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fundamental consequence;) both yielding both the highest encouragements to a good, and determents from a bad life. For, as on the one hand, what can excite us more to the performance of duty, than the assurance of attaining thereby so happy a state? a state of highest dignity and glory, of sweetest comfort and joy; of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, perfect in all respects to the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to their highest pitch of perfection, our bodies become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grossness, unwieldiness, defilement, and deformity, shall be rendered incorruptible, glorious, and spiritual; our souls in their nature perfected, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied; the understanding being full of light, clear and distinct in knowledge of truth, free from error and ignorance; the will steadily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will, free from all perverseness and weakness; our affections set in right order and frame, with constant regularity tending to that which is truly good, and taking full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blissful presence and sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us, of our gracious Redeemer, of the holy angels, of the just made perfect; whose company and conversation how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be! wherein nothing adverse or troublesome can befall us; no unpleasant or offensive object present itself to us; no want, or need of anything; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil, no sorrow or pain, no regret or distaste, no

Ps. xvi. 11.

1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Phil. iii. 21.

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

1 John iii. 2. Heb. xii. 22.

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Rev. xxi. 4. stir or contention, no listlessness or satiety; *God will wipe,* as it is in the Apocalypse, *every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor sorrow, nor clamour,* (or *complaint,*) *nor pain any more:* in fine, a state surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it, of which the highest splendours and choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows, (do yield but faint and im-
1 Cor. ii. 9. perfect resemblances;) comparable to which no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, nor hath it ascended into any heart to conceive the like, (as St Paul out
Isa. lxiv. 4. of the Prophet Isaiah tells us;) the firm belief, I say, and careful consideration of the certainty, by a pious and holy life, of acquiring right unto and possession of such a state, must needs be the greatest excitement possible thereto; as must the loss and falling short thereof be of mighty efficacy to withdraw us from impiety. As on this hand; so on the other hand; the being persuaded, that by neglecting our duty, and transgressing God's law, we shall certainly incur intolerable pains and miseries, without ease or respite, without hope or remedy, without any end; that we shall for ever not only be secluded from God's presence and favour, be deprived of all rest, comfort, and joy; but detruded into utmost wretchedness; a state more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate, than we can imagine; which not the sharpest pain of body, not the bitterest anxiety of mind, any of us ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually with a sulphureous flame, not scorching the skin only, but piercing the inmost sinews; our souls incessantly bit and gnawed upon by a worm, (the

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worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly; of horrid despair ever to get out of this sad estate;) under which vexations unexpressible, always enduring pangs of death, always dying, we shall never die: this persuasion, I say, must needs most effectually deter us from those courses of impiety, which certainly lead to so miserable a condition. If it cannot, what can do it? We must, beyond all impression that any reason can make upon us, be irrecoverably stupid or obstinate; infinitely careless of our own good, bent to our ruin. But these things the time will not permit me further to dilate upon; and I did formerly (in treating upon our Saviour's coming to judgment) somewhat largely press considerations of this nature. I shall only therefore conclude with a prayer to Almighty God, that, according to his infinite mercy, he, by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and obedience, would bring us into everlasting life and happiness; withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would deliver us from eternal death and misery: to whom be all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

LORD'S PRAYER AND THE DECALOGUE

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

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AN EXPOSITION

OF

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

AMONG all the duties prescribed to us by our Religion, the rendering due worship to God is in nature and for consequence the principal; God thereby being most directly honoured and served, we from it immediately deriving most ample and high benefits; to the performance of which duty we are furnished with excellent direction and assistance from that Prayer, which our Lord (at several times and upon several occasions) dictated, and recommended to his disciples, both as a pattern, according to which they should regulate their devotions, (*Pray thus*, or in this manner, saith he in St Matthew,) and as a form, in which they should express them; (*When you pray, say;* that is, say this, or in these words; so he enjoins them in St Luke[a]:) unto it therefore we should carefully attend, as to our best rule; and we should frequently use it as our best matter of devotion: to the well performing of both which duties, it is requisite, that we should distinctly understand the particulars contained therein; in order to which

Matt. vi. 9.

Luke xi. 2.

[a] Quælibet alia verba dicamus, quæ affectus orantis vel præcedendo formet ut clareat, vel consequendo attendit ut crescat, nihil aliud dicimus, quam quod in ista Dominica Oratione positum est, si recte et congruenter oramus.—Aug. [Epist. cxxx. ad Prob. Opp. Tom. II. col. 390 E.] Vide illum.

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purpose we shall endeavour to explain them: but first let us premise a few words in general about prayer.

Prayer, in its latitude of acceptation, doth comprehend all devotion[b], or worship immediately addressed unto Almighty God; consisting of praise, which we render to God in regard to his most excellent perfections and glorious works; of submissive gratulation, declaring our satisfaction in all the dispensations of his most wise and just providence; of thanksgiving, for the numberless great benefits we have received from him; of acknowledging our total dependence on him, and our subjection to him: of professing faith in him, and vowing service to him; of confessing the sins we have committed against him, with the guilt and aggravation of them; of deprecating the wrath and punishment due to us for our offences; of petition for all things needful and convenient for us; of intercession for others, whose good we according to duty or charity are concerned to desire and promote; prayer, I say, (although, according to its most restrained sense, it only doth signify one of these particulars, namely, the petition of what is needful or expedient for us, yet,) in its larger acception, as it commonly is used, it doth comprise them all: and so we may well take it here[c]; this form, although so very brief, being with so admirable wisdom contrived, as without straining the words beyond their natural importance, we may, applying a moderate attention, discern them

[b] Δεήσεις, προσευχαὶ, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαριστίαι.—1 Tim. ii. 1.

[c] Οὐ μόνον εὐχῆς ἐστι διδασκαλία ἐκεῖνα τὰ ῥήματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ βίου τελείου παιδαγωγία·—Chrys. Orat. xxx. Opp. Tom. v. p. 185

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all, as to their main substance, couched therein; so that we may, indeed, reasonably regard this prayer as a complete directory[d], and a full exercise of all our devotion toward God: of devotion, I say, the which (to engage, excite, and encourage us to the careful and constant practice thereof) we may consider enjoined us as a necessary duty, commended to us as a requisite means of good, and a special instrument of all piety, and as a high privilege granted to us by God.

I. It is a natural duty and debt we owe to God, (both in correspondence to the design of our being made and endowed with rational capacities agreeable to our relations; and in requital for our being, and for all the good we have, and do continually receive from him,) as most highly to love and reverence him in our hearts, so to declare our esteem of his excellencies, and our sense of his bounty toward us; to avow the dependence we have upon his will and providence, the obligations we are under to his mercy and goodness; to yield our due homage of respect, submission, and obedience to him: if we do acknowledge a God, our Maker, our Lord, our continual Benefactor, to be, we must consequently acknowledge these performances in reason, justice, and gratitude due to him; and God accordingly requires, and positively enjoins them: he is the Lord our God, whom we must worship and serve; the God whom praise waiteth for; who heareth prayers, and to whom therefore all flesh must come. The Scripture is very frequent in commanding the duty.

Deut. x. 20. Matt. iv. 10. Ps. lxv. 2.

[d] Totius Evangelii breviarium.—Tertull. de Orat. cap. 1. [Opp. p. 130 A.]

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II. It is a most useful means, or a condition requisite, for the procurement of benefits and blessings upon us. God hath declared that he doth accept, he hath promised that he will reward, all devotions with an honest intention and pure mind offered up unto him[e]; that *He is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth;* that *He will be found of them who seek him with all their heart;* that *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; He will hear their cry, and will save them;* that *They who seek him shall not want any good thing;* that *Whatever we ask in prayer believing, we shall receive;* that *If we ask, it shall be given us; if we seek, we shall find; if we knock, it shall be opened to us.* Prayer is also a means of procuring a blessing upon all our undertakings; it sanctifieth every performance. There is no good thing so great and precious; so high above the reach of common power; so strange to expect, or difficult to compass, which we may not easily and surely by this means obtain; relief in all distresses, both of our outward and inward estate; supplies of all our needs, both corporal and spiritual; comfort in all our sorrows and sadnesses; satisfaction in all our doubts and darknesses of mind; help and strength against all our temptations, we may be confident to obtain, if we duly seek them from the Almighty Dispenser of all good gifts: sure promises there are, and obvious examples hereof, too many to be now recited: as, on the other hand, they that will neglect this duty, that will not vouchsafe to seek help and remedy of God, may be sure to want it; shall certainly suffer for their proud contempt, pro-

Ps. cxlv. 18, 19; x. 17. Jer. xxix. 13. Ps. xxxiv. 10. 1 John iii. 22. Matt. xxi. 22; vii. 7. Luke xi. 9. John xiv. 13; xv. 7; xvi. 23.

[e] Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος Θεός.

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fane diffidence, or foolish sloth; *You will not*, saith our Saviour, *come to me, that ye may have life:* no wonder then if they do not receive it, if they will not go thither for it, where only it is to be had. All good things are in God's hand; and we shall never by any force or policy get them thence without his will, moved by entreaty: all good gifts come from heaven; and thence we shall never fetch them down, without ascending thither in our hearts and affections; spiritual goods especially are so high above us, that we can never reach them otherwise than by God's help by humble supplication obtained. John v. 40.

III. It is not only a means, by impetration acquiring for us, but it is an effectual instrument working in us, all true good; it is the channel, by which God conveyeth spiritual light into our minds, and spiritual vigour into our hearts. It is both the seed and the food of spiritual life; by which all holy dispositions of soul and all honest resolutions of practice are bred and nourished, are augmented and strengthened in us[f]. It exciteth, it quickeneth, it maintaineth all pious affections[g]; the love of God can no otherwise than by it be kindled, fomented, or kept in life, (without it we certainly shall have an estrangement, and an aversation from him;) it alone can maintain a constant reverence and awe of God, keeping him in our thought, and making us to live as in his presence; it chiefly enliveneth and exerciseth our faith and our hope in God; it is that which begetteth in our hearts a savoury relish of divine things, which

[f] Difficillimum est opus orare.—Luth.

[g] Τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες.—Rom. xii. 11.

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sweeteneth and endeareth to our souls the practice of piety, which only can enable us with delight and alacrity to obey God's commandments; it alone can raise our minds, from the cares and concernments of this world, to a sense and desire of heavenly things. By it God imparteth strength to subdue bad inclinations, to restrain sensual appetites, to compress irregular passions; to evade the allurements to evil, and the discouragements from good, which this world always presenteth; to support also with patience and equanimity the many crosses and troubles we must surely meet with therein. It is, in short, the only strong bulwark against temptation and sin; the only sure guard of piety and a good conscience; no man, indeed, can be a faithful servant to God, a real friend to goodness, a serious practiser of duty, without a constant tenor of devotion.

IV. It is a most high privilege and advantage to us, that we are allowed to pray and address our devotions to God. To have a free access to the presence and audience of an earthly prince (to the effect of receiving from him all that we could desire) would be deemed a matter of great honour and much advantage: how much more is it so to us, that we are admitted to the presence and ear of the great King of all the world; so mighty in power, so large in bounty, so full of goodness and pity; so thoroughly able, so exceedingly willing to grant and perform our requests! How sweet a thing, of what comfort and benefit is it, to have the liberty of pouring out our souls and our hearts, as the Psalmist speaks, before God; of disburdening our minds of all their cares, their desires, their

Ps. lxii. 8; xlii. 4.

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doubts, their griefs, and anxieties, into the breast of so kind a friend, so wise a counsellor, so able a helper; who alone, indeed, can afford relief, ease, satisfaction, and comfort to us! Considering which things we shall appear, not only very disobedient to God, and highly ingrateful toward him, (who so infinitely condescends in vouchsafing to us dust and ashes (vile and unworthy creatures) leave to speak and converse with him,) but very injurious and unfaithful to ourselves, and to our own good; if we neglect this duty commanded, or slight this privilege indulged to us: Gen. xviii. 27.

In the due performance of which we are directed and assisted by this form of prayer, composed and dictated for that purpose by him, who best knew what we ought to pray for, and how we ought to pray[h]; what matter of desire, what manner of address, what disposition of mind would be most pleasing and acceptable to his Father, would most become and befit us in our approaches to him. We might consequently observe many things concerning those particulars discernible in this form: the sublimity, the gravity, the necessity, the singular choiceness of the matter; together with the fit order and just disposition thereof, according to the natural precedence of things in dignity or necessity; the full brevity, the deep plainness, the comely simplicity of expression; the lowly reverence signified therein, accompanied with due faith and confidence: these, and the like virtues directive of our devotion, we might observe running generally through the whole contexture of this

[h] Deus solus docere potuit, ut se vellet orari.—Tertull. de Orat. cap. 9. [Opp. p. 133 A.]

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venerable form: but we shall rather choose to take notice of them as they shall offer themselves in their particular places; to the consideration of which in order we now do apply ourselves.

Our Father which art in Heaven.

Our Father: upon this title, or manner of compellation, we may first observe, that although our Saviour prescribeth this form as a pattern, and an exercise of private prayer to be performed in the
Matt. vi. 6. closet, (and alone in secret, as is expressed in the Gospel,) yet he directeth us to make our addresses to God in a style of plurality, saying, not my Father, but our Father; thereby, it seems, implying,

1 That we should in our prayers consider and acknowledge the universality of God's power and goodness.

2 That we should not in our conceit proudly and vainly appropriate or engross the regard of God unto ourselves; but remember, that our brethren have an equal share with us therein.

3 That in all our devotions we should be mindful of those common bands which knit us together as men and as Christians, (the band of nature and humanity; the more strict ties of common faith and hope; of manifold relations unto God that made us, and our Saviour that redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who animateth and quickeneth us, and combineth us in spiritual union).

4 That we should bear such hearty goodwill and charitable affection toward others, as not only to seek and desire our own particular and private good, but that of all men; especially of all

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good Christians; who in a peculiar manner are God's children and our brethren: *He did not bid us say, my Father, but our Father, who art in heaven; that, being taught that we have a common Father, we might shew a brotherly good-will one toward another,* saith St Chrysostom[1].

As for the appellation *Father,* it doth mind us of our relation to God, who, upon many grounds and in divers high respects, is our Father; (by nature, for that he gave us our being, and made us after his own image; by providence, for that he continually preserveth and maintaineth us; by grace, for that he reneweth us to his image in righteousness and holiness; by adoption, for that he alloweth us the benefit and privilege of his children, assigning an eternal inheritance to us;) of this relation, which as creatures, as men, as Christians, we bear to God, it mindeth us, and consequently how we ought in correspondence thereto to behave ourselves; yielding to him all respect, affection, and observance; demeaning ourselves in all things as becomes such a relation and rank: this, indeed, of all God's names, titles, and attributes, is chosen as most suitable to the nature of the present duty; as most encouraging to the performance thereof; as most fully implying the dispositions required in us, when we apply ourselves thereto. Our Saviour used to compare prayer to a son's asking nourishment of his father; arguing thence what success and benefit we may expect from it: we come therein to God, not (directly) as to a lord or

Matt. vii. 9. Luke xi. 11.

[1] Οὐ γὰρ ἐκέλευε λέγειν, Πάτερ μου, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἀλλὰ, Πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἵνα κοινὸν Πατέρα ἔχειν διδαχθέντες, ἀδελφικὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους διακύωμεν εὔνοιαν.—Orat. xxx. Opp. Tom. v. p. 186.

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master, to receive commands; but rather as to a father, to request from him the sustenance of our life, and supply of our needs; to render withal unto him our thankful acknowledgments, for having continuedly done those things for us; and to demonstrate our dutiful respect and affection toward him. It is natural for children in any danger, strait, or want, to fly to their parents for shelter, relief, and succour: and it is so likewise for us to have recourse unto God, in all those cases, wherein no visible means of help appear from elsewhere: and to do so the title of Father doth encourage us, signifying not only power and authority over us, but affection and dearness toward us: the name God, importing his excellent perfections; the name Lord, minding us of his power and empire over us, with the like titles declarative of his supereminent majesty, might deter us, being conscious of our meanness and unworthiness, from approaching to him; but the word Father is attractive and emboldening; thinking on that we shall be apt to conceive hope, that, how mean, how unworthy soever, yet being his children, he will not reject or refuse us; for, *If men, being evil, do give good gifts unto their children; how much more will our Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?*

Matt. vii. 11.

It also plainly intimates, how qualified and disposed in mind we should come to God; namely, with high reverence, with humble affection, with hearty gratitude; as to the Author of our being, to him that hath continually preserved and brought us up; from whose care and providence we have received all the good we have ever enjoyed; from

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whose mercy and favour we can only expect any good for the future. By calling God Father, we avow ourselves obliged to honour and love him incomparably beyond all things; we also declare our faith and hope in God; that we believe him well affected toward us, and willing to do us good; and that we thence hope to receive the good desirable from him, (the which are dispositions necessary to the due performance of this duty). It also implieth, that we should come thereto with purity of mind and good conscience, which is also requisite to the same intent; for if we are conscious of undutiful and disobedient carriage toward God, how can we call him Father? with what heart or face can we assume to ourselves the title of children? *If,* saith St Peter, *ye call upon him as Father, who impartially judges according to every man's work,* (that is, who only esteemeth them for his children who truly behave themselves as becometh children,) *pass the time of your pilgrimage in fear,* (or in reverence toward God). We may add, that we also hereby may be supposed to express our charity toward our brethren; who bear unto God, the Father of all men, the same common relation. But I proceed:

Matt. xxi. 22. James i. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

1 Pet. i. 17.

Which art in heaven. God Almighty is substantially present everywhere; but he doth not everywhere in effects discover himself alike, nor with equal splendour in all places display the beams of his glorious majesty. The Scripture frequently mentioneth a place of his special residence, (seated in regions of inaccessible light, above the reach, not only of our sense, but of our fancy and conception,) where his royal court, his presence-chamber,

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his imperial throne are; where he is more immediately attended upon by the glorious angels and blessed saints; which place is called *Heaven,* *The highest heavens;* τὰ ὕψιστα, *The highest places;* by his presence wherein God is described here, as for distinction from all other parents here on earth, so to increase reverence in us toward him, (while we reflect upon his supereminent glory and majesty,) and to raise our hearts from these inferior things unto desire, and hope, and love of heavenly things; *Withdrawing,* saith St Chrysostom[k], *him that prays from earth, and fastening him to the places on high, and to the mansions above.*

Luke ii. 14; xix. 38. Matt. xxi. 9.

But so much for the title. The first sentence of our Prayer is,

Hallowed (or sanctified) be thy name.

Let us first (with St Chrysostom) observe the direction we hence receive in all our prayers,—to have a prime and principal regard to the glory of God; not seeking anything concerning our own good before his praise: that for the order. As to the substance of this particular, we may consider, that sanctity implying a discrimination, a distance, an exaltment in nature or use of the thing, which is denominated thereby; and God's name signifying himself with all that we can know of him; himself, as however discovered or declared, with all that relates to him, and bears his inscription; we do here accordingly express our due acknowledgments and desires; for by a rare complication this sentence doth involve both praise

[k] Τῆς γῆς ἀπάγων τὸν εὐχόμενον, καὶ τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς προσηλῶν χωρίοις, καὶ ταῖς ἄνω διατριβαῖς.—[In Matt. Hom. xix. Opp. Tom. II. p. 137.]

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and petition; doth express both our acknowledgment of what is, and our desire of what should be: we do, I say, hereby partly acknowledge and praise the supereminent perfections of God above all things, in all kind of excellency, joining in that seraphical doxology, (which to utter is the continual employment of the blessed spirits above, who incessantly day and night cry out,) *Holy, Holy, Holy*[1]; confessing with the heavenly host in the Apocalypse, that he is worthy of all honour, glory, and power: we do also partly declare our hearty wishes, that God may be everywhere had in highest veneration; that all things relating to him may receive their due regard; that all honour and praise, all duty and service, may in a peculiar manner be rendered unto him by all men, by all creatures, by ourselves especially: that all minds may entertain good and worthy opinions of him; all tongues speak well of him, celebrate and bless him; all creatures yield adoration to his name, and obedience to his will: that he be worshipped in truth and sincerity, with zeal and fervency; this particularly in the Prophet Isaiah, and by St Peter, is called sanctifying God's name, in opposition to idolatrous and profane Religion: *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, let him be your dread,* saith the Prophet; and, *Fear not their fear, nor be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,* saith the Apostle. Thus do we here pray and wish in respect to all men, and to all creatures capable of thus sanctifying God's name; but more particularly we pray for ourselves,

Rev. iv. 8, 11.

Isa. viii. 13; xxix. 23.

1 Pet. iii. 14, 15.

[1] Τὸ γὰρ ἁγιασθήτω ἀντὶ τοῦ δοξασθήτω εἴρηται.—Chrys. Orat. xxx. Opp. Tom. v. p. 186.

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that God would grant to us, that we, by our religious and righteous conversation, may bring honour to his name; so that men seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven. *Vouchsafe, saith he, that we may live so purely, that all men by us may glorify thee:* so descants St Chrysostom[m].

Matt. v. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

Thy kingdom come.

This petition, or devout wish, being subordinate to the former, as expressing a main particular of that which is there generally desired, (we here to the glory of God esiring a successful and speedy propagation of true Religion,) seems, in its direct and immediate sense, to respect the state of things in that time, more especially befitting our Lord's disciples then, when the kingdom of God (that is, the state of Religion under the evangelical dispensation) was coming and approaching; according to that of our Saviour in St Luke; *I say unto you of a truth, there be some of you standing here that shall not taste death, till they see the kingdom of God;* whence it did become them in zeal to God's glory, and charity for men's salvation, to desire that Christianity might soon effectually be propagated over the world, being generally entertained by men with due faith and obedience; that is, that all men willingly might acknowledge God as their Lord and Maker, worshipping and serving him in truth; that they might receive his blessed Son Jesus Christ as their King and Saviour, heartily

Luke ix. 27. Matt. xvi. 28; iii. 2.

[m] Καταξίωσον γὰρ, φησὶν, οὕτως ἡμᾶς βιοῦν καθαρῶς, ὡς δι' ἡμῶν ἅπαντας σε δοξάζειν, &c.—[In Matt. Hom. XIX. Opp. Tom. II. p. 137.]

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embracing his doctrine, and humbly submitting to his laws: to which purpose our Lord enjoins his disciples to pray, *That the Lord of the harvest would send labourers into his harvest;* and St Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to pray, *That the word of the Lord may run and be glorified.* And in parity of reason, upon the same grounds, we are concerned, and obliged to desire, that Christian Religion may be settled and confirmed; may grow and be increased; may prosper and flourish in the world; that God's authority may, to the largest extension of place, to the highest intention of degree, universally and perfectly, be maintained and promoted, both in external profession and real effect; the minds of all men being subdued to the obedience of faith; and avowing the subjection due to him; and truly yielding obedience to all his most just and holy laws. Thus should we pray that God's kingdom may come; particularly desiring, that it may so come into our own hearts; humbly imploring his grace, that he thereby would rule in our hearts, quelling in them all exorbitant passions and vicious desires, protecting them from all spiritual enemies, disposing them to an entire subjection to his will, and a willing compliance with all his commandments[n]: for this is the kingdom of God, which, as our Lord telleth us, is within us; the which *doth not,* as St Paul teacheth us, *consist in meat and drink,* (in any outward formal performances,) *but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;* that is, in obedience to

Matt. ix. 38. 2 Thess. iii. 1. Luke xvii. 21. Rom. xiv. 17.

[n] Τυραννούμενοι γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν τοῦ σώματος παθημάτων, καὶ μυρίας πειρασμῶν δεχόμενοι προσβολὰς, τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ χρήζομεν βασιλείας, ἵνα μὴ βασιλεύσῃ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ σώματι ἡμῶν, &c.—Chrys. [Orat. xxx. Opp. Tom. v. p. 186.]

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God's will, and in the comfortable consequences
Matt. vi. 33. thereof: this is the kingdom of God, which we are enjoined, before any worldly accommodations, first to seek.

Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

This sentence is likewise complicated of praise, good desire, and petition; for we thereby first do acknowledge the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, in all resolutions of his will and dispensations of his providence.

1 We profess our approbation of all God's counsels, our complacence and satisfaction in all his proceedings, our cheerful submission and consent to all his pleasure; joining our suffrage, and saying in harmony with that blessed choir in the
Rev. xv. 3. Revelation, *Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints:* we disclaim our own judgments and conceits, we renounce our own desires and designs, so far as they appear inconsistent with the determinations of God's wisdom, or discordant with his pleasure; saying after our
Luke xxii. 42. Lord, *Let not my will, but thine be done.*

2 We do also express our desire, that as in heaven all things with a free and undisturbed course do pass according to God's will and good-liking, every intimation of his pleasure finding there a most entire and ready compliance from
Ps. ciii. 21. those perfectly loyal and pious spirits, (those *Ministers of his, that do his pleasure,* as the Psalmist calls them,) so that here on earth the gracious designs of God may be accomplished without opposition or rub; that none should presume, as

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the Pharisees and Lawyers are said to do, ἀθετεῖν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *to disappoint* or *defeat God's counsel;* ἀπωθεῖσθαι, *to thrust away* or *repulse God's word,* as the Jews did in the Acts; to resist, provoke, or defy God by obstinate disobedience, as many are said to do in the Scriptures; but that everywhere a free, humble, hearty, and full obedience be rendered to his commands. Luke vii. 30. Acts xiii. 46.

3 We do also pray, that God would grant us the grace willingly to perform whatever he requires of us, (*Perfecting us,* as the Apostle speaketh, *in every good work to do his will, and working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight,*) contentedly to bear whatever he layeth upon us; that God would bestow upon us a perfect resignation of our wills unto his will; a cheerful acquiescence in that state and station wherein he hath placed us; a submiss patience in all adversities, whereinto he disposeth us to fall; a constant readiness with satisfaction and thankfulness (without reluctancy or repining) to receive whatever cometh from his will, whether grateful or distasteful to our present sense; acknowledging his wisdom, his goodness, his justice in all his dealings towards us; heartily saying with good Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;* with Hezekiah, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken;* with Job, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* and, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord:* yea, it were well, if we could, after the heathen philosopher, upon all occasions with our hearts say, εἰ ταύτῃ τοῖς θεοῖς φίλον, ταύτῃ γινέσθω°. Heb. xiii. 21. Phil. iv. 11. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Kings xx. 19. 2 Sam. xv. 26. Job ii. 10; i. 21. Ps. xxxvii. 5; lv. 22.

° Socrates apud Epict. Ench. [Cap. 52.]

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If God will have it so, so let it be: if we could observe those rules and precepts, which even the philosophers so much inculcate[p]; to commit all our affairs to God, to love and embrace (hug) all events; to follow, and to accompany God; to yield, deliver, and resign ourselves up to him; *Deo se præbere, dedere, tradere,* &c. and the like.

Give us this Day our daily Bread.

I shall not stand to criticise upon the hard word here used, translated *daily;* I only say, that of two senses offering themselves, both are probable, and by good authority countenanced; both are proper and suitable to the matter or nature of the thing: according to one, we pray for the bread τοῦ ἐπιόντος, *of the time to come,* or of that future life, which it shall please God to allow us; according to the other, we request bread ἐπὶ τὸ εἶναι, which is necessary for our being, and the preservation of our lives[q]; joining both together, (which is more sure and safe,) we pray for a competent provision toward the maintenance of our life hereafter, during our appointed time: that for the sense; upon the petition itself we observe:

[p] Τὸ δὲ ὑπόλοιπον τοῦ βίου διεξέλθε, ὡς θεοῖς ἐπιτετροφὼς τὰ σεαυτοῦ πάντα ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς, &c.—M. Ant. IV. § 31. Ἀσπαζόμενος τὰ συμβαίνοντα καὶ ἀπονεμόμενα πάντα.—III. § 4, 16. Cf. II. 17. X. 11. XII. 1. VII. 31.

Ego secundum naturam vivo, si totum me illi dedo.—Sen. De Otio. Sap. cap. XXXII.

Optimum est pati, quod emendare non possis; et Deum quo auctore cuncta proveniunt sine murmuratione comitari.—Hic est magnus animus, qui se Deo tradidit. [Ep. CVII.]—Cf. Epp. XXXVII., LIV., LXXI., &c. De Prov. cap. V.

[q] Ἄρτον ἐπιούσιον, τουτέστιν, ἐπὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ σώματος διαβαίνοντα, καὶ συγκροτῆσαι ταύτην δυνάμενον.—Chrys. Orat. XXX. Opp. Tom. V. 187.

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1 That after we have rendered our due tribute of praise and respect unto God, we are allowed and directed to request of him other good things for ourselves; beginning, as nature prompteth, with the preservation of our beings and lives; whereby we become capable of receiving and enjoying other good things;

2 By doing which we also do imply the sense we have of our total dependence upon God; avowing ourselves to subsist by his care and bounty; disclaiming consequently all confidence in any other means to maintain or support us; in any store we have laid up, or estate we pretend to; in any contrivance or industry we can use; in any succour of friends or relations; for that, notwithstanding all these, we do need our daily bread to be dealt to us by God, and must continually beg it as a gift from his hands.

3 We are by that word, *σήμερον, this day,* taught our duty (signifying with all our performance thereof) of being willing continually to rely upon God; not affecting to be ever so much beforehand, as not to need God's constant assistance: we ask not, that God would give us at once what may serve us for ever, and may put us out of any fear to want hereafter; we ask not for that which may suffice for a long time, for many years, many months, many days; but that God would give us *to-day,* or rather *day by day;* (*τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν,* Luke xi. 3. as it is expressed in St Luke;) that is, that he would continually dispense to us what is needful for us: we should not therefore desire to have an estate settled upon us; to live by ourselves, or on our own incomes; to be set out of God's house,

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or immediate protection and care; this in itself cannot be, (for God cannot alienate his goods from himself, nor can we subsist out of his hand,) nor must we desire it should be: it is a part of atheism, or infidelity, of heathenish profaneness and folly, to desire it, (*These things,* saith our Lord, *do the Gentiles seek;* that is, they are covetous of wealth, and careful for provisions, to live without dependence upon God;) but we must esteem God's providence our surest estate, God's bounty our best treasure, God's fatherly care our most certain and most comfortable support; *Casting all our care on him,* as being assured that *he careth for us;* will not leave nor forsake us; will not withhold what is necessary for our comfortable sustenance.

Matt. vi. 32.
Matt. vi. 25.
1 Pet. v. 7.
Heb. xiii. 5.
Phil. iv. 6.

4 It is here intimated, how sober and moderate our appetites should be, in regard both to the quality and quantity of the things we use: we are directed to ask τροφὴν, οὐ τρυφήν, as St Chrysostom says, necessary food, not luxurious plenty or delicacy: it is bread, (the most simple, homely, and common diet;) that is, such accommodations as are necessary to maintain our lives, and satisfy our natural desires; not superfluities, serving to please our wanton appetites, or humour our curious fancies; it is not variety, daintiness, elegancy, or splendour, we should affect to enjoy, but be content to have our necessities supplied with the coarsest diet and the meanest apparel, if our condition requireth it, or God's providence in an honest way allotteth no other to us: we may soberly and thankfully enjoy what God sends; but we should not presume to ask for or desire other than this.

And for the measure, we learn to ask only for

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so much as shall be fit to maintain us; not for rich, or plentiful store; not for full barns, or for heaps of treasure; not for wherewith to glut, or pamper ourselves; but for daily bread, a moderate provision, then to be dealt to us, when we need it. It follows,

And forgive us our Trespasses[r], as we forgive them that trespass against us;

After the preservation of our beings, (the foundation of enjoying other good things,) our first care, we see, ought to be concerning the welfare of our better part and state; which chiefly consists in the terms whereon we stand toward God, upon whose favour all our happiness dependeth, and from whose displeasure all our misery must proceed. Since therefore we all do stand obnoxious to God's wrath and justice; having omitted many duties which we owe to him, having committed manifold offences against him; it is there most expedient, that we first endeavour to get him reconciled to us, by the forgiveness of our debts and offences: concerning which remission, upon what account it is necessary, upon what terms it is granted, by what means it is obtained, in what manner it is dispensed by God, I have otherwhere touched, and it is not seasonable now further to insist thereon; only it may be pertinent here to observe:

[r] *Our trespasses;* it is *our debts* (τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν) in St Matthew; *our sins* (τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν) in St Luke; and they who trespass against us are in both Evangelists called our debtors: for he that injures another is obnoxious and in debt to him; owing him satisfaction, either by making reparation, or undergoing punishment.

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1 That this being the first of petitions (formally such, and) purely spiritual; we are hereby admonished to lay the foundation of our devotions in humility; that we are obliged, before we presume to ask anything of God concerning our chief happiness and well-being, to reflect upon, acknowledge, and confess our unworthiness, (not coming to our prayers as the Pharisee did, doting upon our worthy qualities and good deeds; but like the poor Publican, with a sense of our infirmities and miscarriages; so as to be ready to acknowledge ourselves, as, indeed, we all are, guilty of many and great sins;) this is here implied; for in requesting pardon for our sins, we confess ourselves to be sinners, and to need God's mercy.

2 We may hence learn the necessity and the excellency of that benefit we here beg: when the Psalmist applied himself to praise God for his benefits, this he set in the first place, as most needful and considerable to him; *Bless the Lord, O my soul,* said he, *and forget not all his benefits,* (or rather, *not any of his benefits,*) *who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases;* and answerably, it is the first particular benefit we pray for.

Ps. ciii. 2, 3.

3 We must take notice, that we are obliged to go to our devotions with universal charity and good-will toward others; *To lift up,* as St Paul enjoineth, *holy hands, without wrath and doubting,* (or *without wrath and dissension,*) to depose all enmity (as our Lord adviseth) before we bring our oblation to the altar of God; reserving no spite or grudge toward any man, but having a heart clear of all ill-will and desire of revenge; being in affec-

1 Tim. ii. 8.

Matt. v. 23.

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tion of mind toward others, as we do wish, and hope, and pray that God would be toward us: such in all reason, equity, and ingenuity should our disposition be; and such God requires it to be; and such we do assert and promise it to be; implying also a compact with God, no otherwise to desire or expect his favour and mercy toward us, than as we resemble him in kind and merciful intentions toward our brethren: it is implied on God's part, that he vouchsafes pardon only upon these terms; yea more, that he doth truly promise pardon upon our performing this condition; so our Saviour, purposely reflecting on this petition, doth afterward expound it; *For*, saith he, *if you forgive to men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:* it also implies a consent on our parts, and submission to this condition, as most equal and reasonable; so that if we break it, if we do retain any uncharitable inclinations, we deal falsely with God; we forfeit all pretence to favour and mercy from him; we are neither qualified for mercy, nor shall obtain it from God.

Matt. vi. 14.

And lead us not into Temptation.

Temptation is sometimes taken, in a middle and indifferent sense, for any occasion by which the moral quality of persons (their virtue or vice) is examined and discovered: so God is said to have tempted Abraham, when he propounded to him the offering up of his son; so he tempted the Israelites, by leading them in that long journey through the wilderness, that he might know what was in their heart, whether they would keep

Gen. xxii. 1.

Deut. viii. 2.

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his commandments, or no: so he likewise tempted them by permitting seducers to do wonderful things,

Deut. xiii. 3. that he might know whether they did love the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul: and because affliction is of such a nature, as to try the temper, disposition, and intentions of men, therefore temptation often is used for affliction. It seemeth also sometimes put in a good sense, for an occasion designed to exercise, or to improve, or to declare the virtues of a person; so the inconveniences and crosses incident to our nature and condition here, the which our Lord did undergo,

Luke xxii. 28. are by St Luke, and others of the Apostles, styled

Heb. ii. 18; iv. 15. 1 Pet. iv. 12; i. 6, 7. temptations; so the fiery trial, in St Peter, was εἰς πειρασμόν, to exercise and refine them, that, saith he, the trial of their faith might be to praise, and honour, and glory; so St James biddeth Christians

James i. 2. to rejoice, when they fall into divers temptations; that is, when they meet with opportunities of exercising their faith and patience; and so we may

Deut. viii. 16. understand that place in Deuteronomy; *Who,* it is said, *fed thee with manna, that he might humble, and prove thee,* (or *tempt thee,* ἵνα ἐκπειράσῃ σε, say the LXX.) *to do thee good at thy latter end: that he might tempt thee;* that is, that he might render thee approved; might exercise and improve thy dependence on God, thy patience, thy obedience. But the word is commonly taken in a worse sense, for an occasion, presented with ill purpose, or naturally tending and not easily avoided, of falling into sin; a stumblingblock, a snare; as when St Paul

1 Tim. vi. 9. saith, that *They who will be rich, do fall* εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα, *into temptation and a snare;* thus St

James i. 13. James assureth us, that God tempteth no man; that

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is, doth not intend to seduce or inveigle any man into sin. Yet because nothing in the world, either good or bad, doth happen without God's permission and governance; and the Devil himself must obtain license from God, before he can tempt any man, or do any mischief, (as we see in Job's case, and in the history of Ahab;) since God seeth whatever is done, and with greatest ease could hinder it; and doth not otherwise than for some good end suffer any evil to be designed or achieved; it is the style of Scripture to attribute such things in some sense to him; as when God is said to send Joseph into Egypt to preserve life; whenas in truth his brethren, out of envy and ill-will, did sell him thither; and, God is said to move David to number the people; whenas, indeed, Satan (as it is otherwhere affirmed) provoked him to number them: and that horrid tragedy acted by the Jews upon our blessed Saviour is said to be brought to pass by the hand and definite counsel of God; because God foreseeing the temptations which those men should incur of committing such acts, and their inclinations to perform them, did resolve not to interpose his power in hindrance of them, but suffering them to proceed, would turn their mischievous practices to an excellently good end, and use them as instruments of his just, holy, and gracious purposes: thus then, whereas by temptation here is meant any occasion alluring or provoking to sin, or withdrawing from duty, with a violence, all things considered, exceeding our strength to resist or avoid; (or however such an one that is apt to overthrow us;) God may be said to bring them into it, whom in justice he permits to be exposed

Job ii. 6. 1 Kings xxii. 22.

Gen. xlv. 5.

2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

1 Chron. xxi. 1.

Acts ii. 23; iv. 28.

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thereto; although he do no otherwise intermeddle, or concur therein, than by not affording, or by withdrawing, his especial direction and assistance; leaving them without check blindly or wilfully to follow the sway of their own tempers, the instinct of their vain minds, the bent of their corrupt wills, the violence of their unruly passions and appetites; letting them to fall into the manifold snares of false opinion, evil custom, and contagious example, which the world sets before them; (the world, which by its fair promises and pleasing flatteries enticeth to sin, or by its angry frowns and fierce threats discourageth from goodness;) permitting the Devil, without control or impediment, by his wiles to delude and seduce them; which kind of proceeding of God with men is clearly represented in the 81st Psalm; where, of the Israelites, God says, that having signally declared his pleasure to them, and by promise of great benefits invited them to observe it, upon their wilful neglect, he dealt thus with them; *But,* says God there, *my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts; and they walked in their own counsels.* In such manner, if God, provoked thereto by our heinous miscarriages, doth justly bring us into, or doth let us enter into temptation, (as our Lord otherwhere expresseth it; *Pray,* saith he, *that ye enter not into temptation,*) we shall infallibly run into many grievous sins and desperate mischiefs; no less surely, than we shall wander and stumble in the dark, than we shall slide and fall in the most slippery places, and sometimes be entangled, when we do walk in the midst of snares,

Ps. lxxxi. 11, 12.

Luke xxii. 40, 46.

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surrounded with traps innumerable, most cunningly laid to catch us; *It is not,* saith the Prophet, *in man to direct his steps,* so as to go straight and upright; it is not in him to see his duty, to bend his inclinations to compliance therewith; to restrain his appetites, when sensible objects forcibly press on them; to govern his passions, when they are vehemently stirred to disorderly motion; we do continually need God's instruction to guide us, God's hand to uphold us, God's care and help to guard us: when therefore, I say, our condition and circumstances do minister dangerous occasions of sin; when our vain and weak tempers do incline or betray us thereto; when the world would smile or frown us into it; when the Devil violently solicits, or thrusts on toward it; thus to be destitute of God's grace, thus to be left to ourselves, is the most horrible judgment that can be. In such cases and seasons God's interposal is necessary, either to remove those temptations, or to support and defend us from the prevalence of them, φυλάσσων ἀπταίστους, *Keeping us from stumbling and falling,* as St Jude speaks; *Not suffering us,* as St Paul expresseth it, *to be tempted above what we are able, but making with the temptation also a way to escape, so that we shall be able to sustain it.*

Jer. x. 23.

Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

Jude 24.

1 Cor. x. 13.

That God would please to do this for us, we do here pray; and in pursuance of this petition we subjoin that which in part may pass for an illustration thereof, (implying an antithesis serving to that purpose: for, delivering from evil importeth the same with ῥύεσθαι ἐκ πειρασμοῦ, being rescued from temptation, in St Peter; *The Lord,* saith he, *knoweth how to rescue the godly out of temptation;*

2 Pet. ii. 9.

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Rev. iii. 10. and τηρεῖν ἐκ τῆς ὥρας τοῦ πειρασμοῦ, *to preserve from the time of temptation,* in the Revelation; which are opposed to bringing into temptation;) partly it may be supposed an improvement thereof; delivering from evil signifying perhaps somewhat more, than not permitting us to incur occasions strongly inviting us to evil; even the effectual keeping us from being overborne or complying with it. But let us consider that petition itself.

But deliver us from Evil.

From evil, ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ· St Chrysostom takes it for the Devil[s]; who is ὁ πονηρός, *The evil one,* the tempter, who seduceth us to evil: but we shall take it according to the more common acception from evil; that is, principally, from sin, or evil moral and spiritual; the only evil, simply and in its own nature such, and the root of all other evil; from that, and consequently from all mischief (evil natural and temporal, or evil penal and afflictive) which may grow upon, or sprout from thence. As for such evils as these; the want of things necessary or convenient for us; bodily disease and pain; disappointment in our designs, and ill success in our undertakings; disgrace and reproach upon our good names; dangers, difficulties, and distresses concerning our outward estate; distractions, vexations, and troubles of mind about temporal matters, with the like evils, (in some sense, in some degree evils, or appearing such to our natural sense and fancy;)

[s] [Πονηρὸν δὲ ἐνταῦθα τὸν διάβολον καλεῖ, κελεύων ἡμᾶς ἄσπονδον πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔχειν πόλεμον.—In Matt. Hom. XIX. Opp. Tom. II. p. 140.]

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we may, indeed, deprecate them, as even our Lord himself did, with submission, as he did, to the wisdom and will of God, in case it pleaseth him, and he thinketh fit to remove them: but all these things being but names and empty sounds in comparison to spiritual and eternal evils, (such as are vicious distempers of mind; indispositions to serve God; ill progress in our spiritual affairs; dissatisfaction concerning our state in respect to God; actual transgression of God's holy will and law; incurring God's displeasure and disfavour; being deprived of his grace and assistance; wanting the communion and comfort of his Holy Spirit; remorse of conscience, and anguish of spirit for having violated or neglected our duty; blindness of mind, hardness of heart; want of love, reverence, devotion toward God, of charity and goodwill toward our neighbour; of sobriety, humility, regularity of passion, and calmness of temper, in respect to ourselves and the inward frame of our souls; these, I say, and such like evils,) we should absolutely request of God, that he in mercy would deliver and free us from them; they being irreconcileably repugnant to his will and glory, and inconsistent with our eternal welfare. Yet even these, and all other things, we do request only in general terms, leaving the distinct matter, and manner, and measure, according to which they should be dispensed, to the wisdom and goodness of God; *Who doth,* as our Lord telleth us, *know what things we have need of, before we ask him;* and is not only able, as St Paul says, but willing also, *to do* for us *superabundantly above what we can ask or think.* We are hereby (it seems) taught

Matt. vi. 8.

Eph. iii. 20.

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this point of good manners in our devotion, not to be tediously punctual and particular in our prayers, as if God needed our information, or were apt to neglect the particulars concerning our good.

We shut up all with a doxology, most suitable to the nature of devotion, signifying our due faith, our affection, and our reverence toward God.

For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

That is, for thou hast a perpetual and unmoveable authority, whereby justly to dispose of all things; thou hast an indefectible and irresistible power, whereby thou canst effect whatever seems just and good to thee; wherefore we profess only to rely upon, and seek help from thee; with hope and confidence we address ourselves to thee for the supply of our needs: *Thine is the glory;* all honour and reverence, all love and thankfulness are due unto thee; therefore we render our adorations and acknowledgments to thee. Even so to thee, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever ascribed all glory and praise. *Amen.*

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AN EXPOSITION

OF

THE DECALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH this system of precepts may seem to have been in its design rather political, than moral; to regard public and external, rather than private and interior action; that great branch of morality, which respecteth ourselves in our private retirements, or in our particular conversation, sobriety of mind and manners, being scarce touched herein, at least not openly and plainly expressed; as also devotion toward God, (in any of its kinds, of praise, thanksgiving, confession of sin, prayer and intercession,) that great part of natural religion, being not explicitly and positively enjoined: although also (as by the introduction thereto, and some passages therein, especially as it is delivered in Deuteronomy, may appear) it seemeth particularly to concern the Jewish nation[a]; a people called and chosen by God out of all nations, to be governed in a more special and immediate manner by God himself, obliged to him by peculiar benefits and favours, designed by him to a separate manner of living; being also perhaps in temper and disposition, as well as in condition and cir-

[a] Ὁ γὰρ ἐν Χωρὴβ παλαιὸς ἤδη νόμος καὶ ὑμῶν μόνον, &c.—Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. [§ 11. Opp. p. 111 D.]

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cumstances of life, different from other people; whence laws convenient (or in a manner necessary) for them might not so well suit to all others; upon which accounts, as other of their laws, so perchance some passages in this notable part of them, may not unreasonably be deemed peculiarly to concern them; although however this system doth more directly and immediately oblige that people, all being formally, and in style of law, directed only to them, promulged in their ears, expressed in their language, inserted into the body of their laws, as a principal member of them; it being also expressly called a covenant with that people, (*He declared unto you,* says the text, *his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments,*) and accordingly was reposed in the ark, hence it seems named *The ark of the covenant,* the which, when all nations should be converted to God, and admitted into the Church, was, as the Prophet Jeremiah foretold, to be utterly discarded and laid aside; (*In those days,* saith God in him, *they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.*) Hence, although some passages herein, according to their primary, strict, and literal meaning, might never have been intended universally and perpetually to oblige; yet, notwithstanding these exceptions, if we consider,

Deut. iv. 13; x. 2. Exod. xxxiv. 1, 28.

Jer. iii. 16, 17.

1 The manner of its delivery; with what extraordinary solemnity it was proclaimed; how it was dictated immediately from God's own mouth; and written with his finger; or,

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2 The matter of it, containing the prime dictates of natural reason, the chief rules of piety toward God, and equity toward our neighbour; (whence those elogies conferred on it, in Nehemiah; *Thou camest also down upon mount Sinai — and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments:* and by St Paul; *The law is holy; the commandment holy, just, and good:* for that commendation doth, I suppose, especially respect this part of the Jewish Law, out of which he takes his instance, *Thou shalt not covet:*) if we also consider, Neh. ix. 13. Rom. vii. 12. Rom. vii. 7.

3 The end and design of these precepts, which was to ground them in true notions of Religion, and to dispose them to the practice of righteousness; to render them loyal and acceptable subjects to God; to promote God's glory and their own good; which being expressed in general concerning their law, doth more especially agree to this system; being as the base and platform, the heart and quintessence of all their other laws; the which seem added as superstructures on it, or fences thereof. Deut. x. 12.

4 If we also consider, that our Saviour did not derogate from this Law; but declared his intention only to expound it, or to ampliate and extend it; (they are the words of Tertullian and Irenæus;) and how the Apostles do sometimes allege some passages in it, as retaining some authority and force to oblige. Rom. vii. 7. Eph. vi. 2.

5 Considering also, further, that there is no commandment herein (howsoever according to its immediate and direct sense seeming peculiar to that people) which may not in a larger, or in a

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mysterious and spiritual meaning, which at least may not according to good analogy, or parity of reason, concern us; obliging us, if not by direct authority in punctual manner to the very same thing, yet, as a signification of God's pleasure and approbation, to somewhat answerable and like thereto.

6 Lastly, If we consider that all, or the greatest part of, the main duties concerning us are either plainly expressed, or closely insinuated in them; or may at least be conveniently reduced to them; our Saviour himself having gone before, directing us in the matter and manner of doing it:

Considering, I say, these things, we have no small reason to yield great veneration to this ancient system of precepts; and to acknowledge the great use thereof in order to the guidance of our life and practice: we accordingly shall so descant thereon, as by considering the main drift, intrinsic reason, and spiritual intention of each particular, to reduce the chief precepts of Christian doctrine which oblige us thereto.

Premising thus much, I address my discourse to the particulars; omitting all controverted niceties concerning the division thereof, and all circumstantial questions; touching only such things as shall appear substantial and useful.

God spake all these Words, saying:

This is a title, or superscription, like the *Par de le Roi* (*By the King*) at the head of a proclamation, declaring from whom, and in what manner, that which follows doth come; and therefore implying what it is, and how it should be received.

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God spake: it comes from God, as author; and that most immediately, as it were, from his own mouth; and hath consequently the nature and force of a law, obliging to highest regard and obedience; as that which proceedeth from the most sovereign, unquestionable, and uncontrollable authority; which is promulged in a way most evident and most direct. Every signification of God's purpose or pleasure is usually called God's word; for *God,* as the Apostle says, *in divers kinds and manners did speak unto the fathers:* and to every such word our ear should be attentive, our heart should be submissive, our hand should be obedient; but especially they should be so, when God himself immediately declares his mind and will; as he did notoriously in this case, by a great voice, distinctly audible and intelligible, miraculously formed by himself; *Behold,* says the people, *the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth:* and if whatever is in God's name (by message of angels, by inspiration of men, or by any other ways) revealed, must be entertained with all submiss respect, what regard is due to that word, which God is pleased, not by his ministers and instruments, but himself in person, as it were, to pronounce!

Heb. i. 1.

Deut. v. 24.

These words: that is, these speeches or sentences; (for so a word in Scripture style signifieth;) or these things and matters; (for the Hebrew word *debarim,* as the Greek ῥήματα, signifieth both words and things:) they are several times in the Pentateuch called the *ten words,* or *ten things;*

Exod. xxiv. 28.

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Deut. iv. 13; x. 2. James ii. 10, 11. Matt. v. 19.

whence the system of them is named the *Decalogue.*

All these words: all, without distinction or exception, did proceed from the same authority, and in the same manner; and all therefore do require the like regard and observance to be yielded to them.

I am the Lord; or, I am Jehovah, thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; out of the house of bondage;

These words are by some taken for a precept, enjoining the acknowledgment and acceptance of God, answerable to what is here implied; and consequently all the positive duties of Religion, deducible hence: but we see the style is declarative and assertive, not directly imperative; and so it may pass rather as a preface, further enforcing obligation to obedience; wherein are expressed or intimated the chief reasons upon which it is grounded; every word containing in it somewhat of remarkable emphasis.

I am Jehovah; or that very same God, who under this appellation discovered myself to thy forefathers; who enacted a special covenant with them; who received homage, worship, and engagements to service from them; who promised especial protection and favour to them and to their seed; that *Jehovah,* who indeed *am,* what this name importeth, the only true and real God; eternal, independent, and indefectible in essence; true and infallible in word; constant and immutable in purpose; firm and faithful in performance

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of whatever I promise or threaten; that same *Jehovah* I am: to whose words therefore, upon all accounts of reason, of duty, of interest, thou particularly dost owe most submissive attention and obedience.

Thy God: that supereminent Being and Power, to whom thou peculiarly dost owe worship and honour, love and affection, duty and service; who although he be, indeed, the Lord of all the world, yet beareth a special relation unto thee; as having chosen and avouched thee to be a special people to himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth; having promised thee to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and having by many signal demonstrations of favour and mercy confirmed to thee the performance of his covenant and promise; thou also reciprocally having avowed me to be thy God, to walk in my ways to keep my statutes, my commandments, my judgments, and to hearken to my voice.

Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18.

Deut. xxvi. 19.

Deut. xxvi. 16.

Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt; out of the house of bondage: This a particular and most remarkable instance, by which it appeareth what God it is that doth thus impose law upon them, and how they are obliged to entertain it: that God it is, who in pursuance of his singular favour toward thee, and of his covenant made with thee, hath particularly obliged thee by so eminent a benefit, in a manner so full of wonder in itself, so full of grace toward thee, delivering thee from saddest oppression and slavery, bringing thee into a desirable state of present liberty, and of sure tendency (not other-

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wise than by thy fault to be frustrated) toward enjoyment of rest, of plenty, of all joy and comfort in the promised land; declaring hereby, as his glorious and divine perfections of wisdom and power, so his exceeding goodness toward thee, his faithful care over thee, his readiness and sufficiency, in all thy needs and exigencies, to protect, preserve, and deliver thee:

I then being such, Jehovah, the only true God; thy God, by particular engagement and endearment; thy gracious and bountiful benefactor, not in will only, but in deed, do thus propound my will unto thee; and upon all accounts of general and special duty, of reason, of justice, of gratitude, require thy regard and observance of what follows.

Now what God in a direct and literal sense thus speaketh to the Jewish people, may, according to likeness of case and parity of reason, (especially in a mystical and spiritual way,) upon more considerable and effectual accounts, be applied unto us: the Lord Jehovah is such no less to us than to them: he is *The same yesterday, to day, and for ever;* to him, as to the only true, eternal, and Almighty God, the essential Author, Lord, and Governor of all things, our highest respect and observance are due; he also, in a stricter relation, founded on higher grounds, is our God, having chosen us, and consecrated us more especially to himself; having received us into a closer confederacy, (a new and better covenant, as the Apostle calls it, established upon better promises;) having obliged us by granting nobler privileges, and dispensing more excellent benefits to us: who like-

Heb. xiii. 8.

Heb. viii. 6; vii. 22.

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wise hath brought us up out of a spiritual Egypt, and state of infinitely more wretched bondage; hath rescued us from the tyrannical dominion of Satan, (a far more intolerable cruel and hard master than any Pharaoh;) hath freed us from serving sin in our souls and bodies, a far harder service than making bricks, or any bodily toil can be; who hath conducted us in the way, and conferred on us an assured hope, (if we be not wanting to ourselves and our duty,) of entering into the heavenly Canaan, a place of perfect rest and unconceivable bliss; *Who,* as St Paul expresseth it, *hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his most beloved Son:* who therefore here, according to spiritual intent, may be understood to speak in a higher strain to us; justly exacting a more punctual and accurate obedience to his commandments. But so much for that part which seems introductory. Col. i. 13.

I. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

It is in the Hebrew, *There shall be to thee no other Gods* (or *no strange Gods;* for *alii* some render it, some *alieni,*) על פני (*al pani*) *to my face,* or *at my face;* that is, in comparison, or competition with me: so as to be confronted to me; or together and in consort with me: *I am he,* saith God otherwhere, *and there is no God* עמדי (*immadhi*) *with me,* or *beside me;* πλὴν ἐμοῦ, the LXX. render it; and so the phrase commonly importeth; as in that saying of the Scribe, answering to this; Deut. xxxii. 39.

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Mark xii. 32. *There is one God, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος πλὴν αὐτοῦ, and there is no other* God *beside him:* but we need not criticise on the words, the sense being plain; as containing a prohibition of assuming any other into partnership with the one true God; acknowledging, in mind or in outward expression, any other for God. The precept, as most of the rest, is in form negative and prohibitive, but supposeth and implieth somewhat affirmative and positive; as the rest also may be conceived to do; it implies this affirmative precept, Thou shalt have me for thy God. Now to have for our God, signifies, as to internal disposition of mind, a most high esteem, honour, dread, and love of that Being, as endued with attributes and perfections superlatively excellent; the admiring all his works, approving all his actions, acquiescing in all his proceedings and dealings with us; the reposing our hope and trust in him, as most able and willing to help us, and do us good: in outward expression, to acknowledge, praise, and bless him as such; to yield all fitting demonstrations of respect to his name, and to whatever is specially related to him; patiently to submit to his will, and readily to obey his commandments: these principally and the like acts of internal devotion and external piety are comprised in the words, having him for our God, and we are to understand them here enjoined to us; the same which is in Scripture called the fearing, the serving, the worshipping, the loving God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our mind, and all our might. This is implied: and it is expressly prohibited us to yield to any other beside him the like esteem, acknowledgment, or service. That there is

Matt. xxii. 37. Luke x. 27. Deut. vi. 5.

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in truth but one such being, to whom eminently those acts are due, nature, ancient tradition, general consent, and especially divine revelation, do assure us; whereupon is consequent, that yielding them (yielding, I say, those opinions, estimations, and affections of our mind, or those acknowledgments and expressions in word, or those performances in deed or work, which we before specified) to any other being whatever, whether really existent in the world, or merely formed by our imagination, is highly unreasonable, unbeseeming us, and unjust toward him.

1 It is highly unreasonable, as false and groundless in itself, as vain and unprofitable to us, as productive of many bad effects. It is from error in a matter of the highest nature and mainest consequence; and so beyond any other mistake hurtful to us, as reasonable and intelligent creatures; μετάλλαξις τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ψεύδει, *The transmuting the truth of God into a lie,* St Paul calls it; reckoning it for a grievous folly and crime. It is a vanity of all most lamentable; a pursuance of shadows, an embracing of clouds; a building in air, or mere vacuity; a leaning upon that which hath no substance, or no strength to support us; a dreaming and doting upon mere nothing; whence those false deities well in Scripture are termed μάταια, *vanities;* for that, as they have no truth, or substance, or efficacy considerable in them, so all our thoughts, affections, expectations, and labours are idly misemployed, and unprofitably misspent upon them.

Rom. i. 25.

Jer. ii. 13.

Jer. viii. 19, &c. Acts xiv. 15, &c.

2 It is also a thing most unbeseeming us men, (whom God hath placed in so high a rank of

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worth and dignity among his creatures; who are in our original so near of kin, so like in nature, so dear in relation and regard unto God himself,) to admire and worship, to place our choice affections upon, to afford lowly submissions unto, to rest our hope and confidence in, any other but him, who alone truly so far excels us, and can worthily challenge such respects from us: all flattery is base and unworthy; but this of all is the worst and most unbecoming.

3 To do so, is also most unjust and injurious to God; to whom, as to the Author of our being, and of all our good received since, we do owe all that our mind can yield of reverence, all that our heart can hold of affection, all that our tongue can utter of praise, all that our utmost might can perform of service: and since the exhibiting to any other thing part of these must needs not only by that communication debase and derogate from their worth, but also withdraw them in great measure from him[a], so diminishing and embezzling his due, (for we cannot, as our Saviour teacheth us, together adhere unto, or serve, divers masters;) therefore having any other God, but the true one, is a high indignity and a heinous injury to him.

Matt. vi. 24.

This command therefore is most reasonable upon many accounts[b]; which, as it hath been in

[a] Οὐ περισπᾶται πρὸς τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ἄλλῳ τινὶ δουλεύειν μετ' αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ πρὸς τὸ δυσὶ κυρίοις δουλεύειν.—Orig. con. Cels. Lib. VIII. p. 382.

[b] Λέγει ὁ Ζένων, ὁ τῆς Στωϊκῆς κτίστης αἱρέσεως—μήτε ναοὺς δεῖν ποιεῖν μήτε ἀγάλματα· μηδὲν γὰρ εἶναι τῶν θεῶν ἄξιον κατασκεύασμα. —Clem. Alex. Strom. v. [§ 12. Opp. Tom. II. p. 691.]

Id. de Numa. Strom. I. [Νουμᾶς δὲ ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς, Πυθαγόριος μὲν ἦν· ἐκ δὲ τῶν Μωσέως ὠφεληθεὶς, διεκώλυσεν ἀνθρωποειδῆ καὶ ζωόμορφον εἰκόνα Θεοῦ Ῥωμαίους κτίζειν.—§ 15. Opp. Tom. I. p. 358.]

Vid. Aug. de Civ. Dei iv. 31. [Dicit (Varro) enim antiquos

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grossest manner violated by those who have not acknowledged or worshipped any God at all, and by those who have acknowledged and adored many gods, (by all Atheists and Polytheists;) from which transgressions thereof we Christians may seem totally exempt, who in formal profession and practice have but one God, the Maker and Lord of all things, infinitely perfect and glorious; yet there are many subtle, and, perchance, no less mischievous transgressions thereof, of which even we may be very guilty, and to which we are very obnoxious. If we do not with all our hearts reverence and love the most wise and powerful, the most just and holy, the most good and gracious God; if we do not trust and hope in him, as the fountain of all our good; if we do not diligently worship and praise him; if we do not humbly submit to his will and obey his laws, we break the positive intent of this law, not having him for our God; being, indeed, like those of whom St Paul speaketh, *Who profess to know God,* (that is, who in words and outward pretence acknowledge him,) *but in works deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* Likewise, if we frame in our fancy an idea untrue, disagreeable unto, or unworthy of, that one most excellent Being, and to such a phantasm of our own creation do yield our highest respects and best

Tit. i. 16.

Romanos plus annos centum et septuaginta deos sine simulacro coluisse. Quod si adhuc, inquit, mansisset, castius dii observarentur. Cui sententiæ suæ testem adhibet inter cetera etiam gentem Judæam; nec dubitat eum locum ita concludere, ut dicat, qui primi simulacra deorum populis posuerunt, eos civitatibus suis et metum demsisse et errorem addidisse; prudentes existimans deos facile posse in simulacrorum stoliditate contemni.—Opp. Tom. VII. col. 111 G.]

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affections, we break this law, and have another God to ourselves. If upon any creature (whether ourselves or any other thing) we impart our chief esteem or affection, or employ our most earnest care and endeavour, or chiefly rely upon it, or most delight in it, that thing we make a god unto us, and are guilty of breaking this law. Hence St Paul more than once calls the covetous (or wrongful) person an idolater; and our Lord calls the immoderate pursuit of riches, the serving (or worshipping) of Mammon; and St Paul speaketh of some persons who were φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι, *Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God;* of whom otherwhere he says, that *Their God was their belly:* we meet with those in the Scripture, who put their trusts in their horses and their chariots; with those, who sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their drag; with them, who trust in man, and make flesh their arm; (men of Mezentius's faith, ready to say with him, *Dextra, mihi Deus, et telum, quod missile libro*[c];) with those, whose heart is lifted up, (as the prince of Tyre in Ezekiel,) and who say they are gods: these, and whoever practise in like manner, are so many transgressors of this covenant: in short, whoever chiefly regards and affects, seeks and pursues, confides and delights in wealth, or honour, or pleasure; wit, wisdom, strength, or beauty; himself, friends, or any other creature, he hath another God, against the design and meaning of this holy law.

Eph. v. 5. Col. iii. 5.

Matt. vi. 24.

2 Tim. iii. 4.

Phil. iii. 19.

Psal. xx. 7.

Hab. i. 16.

Jer. xvii. 5.

Ezek. xxviii. 2. Isai. x. 13.

[c] Virg. Æn. x. 773.

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II. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven Image, &c.

The first commandment determined the final object of our Religion; this doth limit the manner of exercising and expressing it; as to the chief intent of it, interdicting that mode, which in the practice of ancient times had so generally prevailed, of representing the deities (apprehended so) in some corporeal shape, and thereto yielding such expressions of respect, as they conceived suitable and acceptable to such deities. I cannot stand to declare the rise and progress of such a practice; how the Devil's malice, and some men's fraud conspiring with other men's superstitious ignorance and fondness, prevailed so far to impose upon mankind; I shall only observe, that men naturally are very prone to comply with suggestions to such guises of Religion: for as the sense of want, and pain, and manifold inconvenience, not to be removed or remedied by any present sensible means, doth prompt men to wish and seek for help from otherwhere; and this disposes them to entertain any hopes propounded to them (with how little soever ground of probability) of receiving it from any absent or invisible power; as it also consequently engageth them to undertake any conditions required by those who propound such hopes, as needful for obtaining thereof; whence the ordinary sort of men are very apt to embrace any way of Religion suggested to them, especially by persons of credit, and authority for knowledge; so also, when the proposition thereof doth come

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attended with circumstantial appearances, and shews, gratifying their senses, or humouring their passions, or delightfully amusing their fancies, it most easily allures and takes them; as likewise, on the other side, when abstraction of mind and restraint of passion are required, and sense or fancy are little entertained thereby, men are somewhat averse from such proposals of Religion, and are not so easily brought heartily to like, or earnestly to embrace them: wherefore since the propounding of images and sensible representations, (relating to somewhat not immediately discerned, from whence men are promised the supply of their needs, or relief from the inconveniences which they endure,) by their magnificency, beauty, curiosity, strangeness, or even by their sensibility itself, doth make so facile and pleasant impressions upon the dull and low conceits of men; it is the less wonderful, that men commonly[a] have been so easily inveigled into such idolatrous superstitions, so unreasonable in themselves, and of so mischievous consequence. For what can be more senseless, than to imagine, that that Being, which in wisdom and power is sufficient to overrule nature, and thereby to afford us the assistance we need, may be resembled by any of these corporeal things, the best of which we cannot, without debasing ourselves, esteem superior to ourselves? how unreasonable is it to conceit thus, how unworthy is it, and unsuitable to the dignity of our nature, derived from heaven, to crouch unto such mean representations! It is St Paul's discourse; *Being,* saith he, *the offspring of*

Acts xvii. 29.

[a] Κοινὸς ἁπάντων νόμος.—Max. Tyr. Diss. xxxviii. [viii. p. 89. Ed. Markland.] Where he defendeth idolatry.

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God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. How injurious also to that most excellent nature must it be to frame, and expose to view, such, not only homely and mean, but, in respect of the divine nature, most foul and ugly, portraitures of him, which cannot but tend to vilify him in men's conceit[b]! He that should form the image of a serpent, or a toad, and exhibit it as the similitude of a king, would surely derogate much from his majesty, and beget very mean and unbeseeming conceits of his person in their minds whom he should persuade to take it for such; and infinitely more must he detract from the dignity, and diminish the reverence due to that immense, almighty, all-wise, most pure and perfect Being, who shall presume to present any sensible, any finite, any corruptible thing, as a resemblance of him: *Changing,* as St Paul expresseth it, *the glory* Rom. i. 23. *of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things;* as the Israelites are said to have changed their glory (that is, their glo- Ps. cvi. 20. rious God) into the similitude of an ox, that eateth grass. No wonder it was, that they, who used such expressions of their Religion, had so low opinions concerning those supposed deities whom they worshipped; that they supposed them liable to such passions, fathered such actions upon them,

[b] Ἐξευτελίζει γὰρ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ σεμνότητα ἡ ἐν ἑτοίμῳ τῆς ὄψεως συνήθεια· καὶ τὴν νοητὴν οὐσίαν δι' ὕλης σεβάζεσθαι, ἀτιμάζειν ἐστὶν αὐτὴν δι' αἰσθήσεως.—Clem. Alex. Strom. v. [§ 5. Opp. Tom. II. p. 662.] *The being ordinarily exposed to view doth,* saith Clemens Alexandrinus, *extenuate the venerability of God; and to worship the intelligible nature by matter doth vilify it through the sense.*

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described them as vile in their dispositions and their doings, as they represented them in their shape. Most reasonable therefore is this prohibition of making any resemblance, of what kind soever, (by picture, sculpture, or fusion,) in order to religious adoration; and yielding to them any such signification of respect, which the custom or consent of men hath appropriated to Religion; as bowing, falling down, lying prostrate before them, or the like: most reasonable, I say; for since there is but one proper and allowable object of our worship, as the first commandment declares and enacts, the making an image of any other existent in nature, or devised by our own fancy in order to the worship thereof, is but a pursuance of that unreasonable, unhandsome, and unjust superstition there forbidden; adding some absurdity in the manner to the pravity in the substance of such worship.

And as for that one true object of our devotion, the eternal, immense, and all-perfect God; the glorious excellency of whose nature doth infinitely transcend our comprehension, and consequently of whom we cannot devise any resemblance not infinitely beneath him, unlike to him, unworthy of him; (whereby we shall not disparage him, and expose him to irreverent apprehensions, especially with the gross vulgar; whereby, indeed, we shall not cloud his true, inimitable perfections, and affix imperfections to him; blending inexpressible truth with apparent falsehood;) it must be therefore a profane folly to pretend the representing him by any image; and the doing of it is upon such accounts in many places of Scripture

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forbidden; and that it is so here, according to the intent of this precept, is plain by that place in Deuteronomy, where Moses reports the ground of this prohibition; *Take ye therefore,* saith he, *good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire; lest you corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image:* no shape representing God did appear at his utterance of these laws, to prevent their framing any resemblance of God, and taking occasion to practise this sort of worship, thereby implied to be unreasonable: and the Prophet Isaiah having in sublime language and discourse set out the incomparable greatness, power, and majesty of God; (*Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance;— before whom the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of a balance;— yea, before whom all nations are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity;— who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; who stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in;*) having, I say, in this, and more such language, endeavoured to describe the might and majesty of God, he infers; *To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?* and thereupon he proceeds to discourse against making images for religious use. Like whereto is the discourse of St Paul to the Athenians; *God,* saith he, *who made*

Deut. iv. 15.

Isai. xl. 12—22.

ver. 25.

Acts xvii. 24—29.

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the world and all things that are therein, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; nor is worshipped by the hands of men:—we therefore being the offspring of God, ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, the engravement of art and man's device: in which place, as the forming any image to represent divine things is manifestly prohibited, so the reasons which we touched against such practice are discernibly enough insinuated.

Neither should we omit, that this law is confirmed in the New Testament, and there made a part of God's new law: for we are therein often commanded to flee idols, not to be idolaters, to shun idolatry as a most heinous crime, of the highest rank, proceeding from fleshly pravity, inconsistent with good conscience, and exposing to damnation: for the meaning and notion of idolatry in which places, why should we understand it otherwise, than according to the plain sense of the word, which is the worship of images, or resemblances? why should we take it otherwise, than as opposite to God's Law, then in force? why should we otherwise expound it, than according to the common notion and acceptance of God's people at that time? The word idolatry was unknown to other people than the Jews: among the Jews it signified the violation of the second commandment: wherefore the observance of that commandment is established and enforced by the Apostles. The Jews detested the worshipping any images: their detestation was grounded on this Law: they therefore, who earnestly exhort them to continue in detestation thereof, do confirm and enforce the

1 John v. 21. 1 Cor. x. 7, 14; v. 10, 11; iv. 9. Gal. v. 20. Rev. ix. 20; xxi. 8; xxii. 15.

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obligation of this law: nor can we reasonably suppose any distinction, or reservation for any idolatry, (or any worshipping of images,) as lawful or allowable to Christians; since the Apostles, as they found it universally prohibited to the Jews, so they continued to charge Christians against it. This discourse hath more force, considering that the same reason upon which this law was enacted doth still apparently continue; men still unmeasurably affecting this fanciful way of Religion, being apt in the exercise thereof (if not curbed by a law) to dote upon sensible representations; being averse from raising up their minds to the only true object of worship, as endued with intelligible and spiritual perfections: this the experience of men's wild eagerness for images, reliques, and other such foolish trinkets, which had almost quite oppressed our Religion, (as in many ages the best and wisest men did observe and complain,) doth plainly evince.

We may add, that if the common tradition and consent of the ancient Church is in any case a ground of persuasion, or rule of practice to us, we are thence obliged to disapprove and decline the worshipping images; for nothing can be more evident, than that all such worship was not only carefully eschewed, but zealously detested, by the primitive Christians: this is manifest from most express words of the Fathers generally impugning and condemning all worship of images; which are as applicable to that worship which hath been practised among Christians, as to that of the Heathens; their expressions do not signify, nor their arguments prove, anything, if any worship of

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images be allowable; if they do not as well condemn and confute the modern, as the ancient Romans; they could not with any reason or modesty have used such words, or urged such reasons, if their practice had been like that which afterward crept into the Church; their darts then against Pagan idolatry easily might, surely would, have been retorted on themselves; which is so far from having been done, that the Pagans accused them for having no images[c]; *Celsus objecteth*, saith Origen[d], *that we shun making altars, statues, and shrines, thinking this to be a faithful pledge* (or *mark*) *of our secret communion together:* this Origen answers by confessing the matter of fact, but defending the right; Not for your reason, saith he, we shun these things, *But because we by the doctrine of Jesus, having found the true manner of piety toward God, do eschew those things, which in conceit or appearance of piety do make men impious*[e]; and the images of Christians are, saith he, their virtues, whereby they resemble God, and truly worship him; and every

[c] Cur nullas aras habent, templa nulla, nulla nota simulacra? —Minuc. Fel. [cap. x. 2.]

In hac enim consuestis parte crimen nobis maximum impietatis affigere: quod neque sedes sacras venerationis ad officia construamus, non Deorum alicujus simulacrum constituamus, aut formam, &c.—Arnob. Lib. VI. [cap. 1.]

[d] Κέλσος φησὶν ἡμᾶς βωμοὺς, καὶ ἀγάλματα, καὶ νεὼς ἱδρυσθαι φεύγειν· ἐπεὶ τὸ πιστὸν ἡμῖν ἀφανοῦς καὶ ἀπορρήτου κοινωνίας εἶναι σύνθημα.—Con. Cels. Lib. VIII. p. 389.

Ὁ Μωσῆς καὶ τὰς δοκίμους καὶ γλαφυρὰς τέχνας, ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιΐαν, ἐκ τῆς καθ' αὐτὸν πολιτείας ἐξήλασε.—Phil. Jud. de Gig. [§ 13. Opp. Tom. I. p. 270. Ed. Mang.]

[e] —ἀλλ' ὅτι εὑρόντες, διὰ τὴν Ἰησοῦ διδασκαλίαν, τὸν τρόπον τῆς εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβείας, φεύγομεν τὰ φαντασίᾳ εὐσεβείας ἀσεβεῖς ποιοῦντα, &c.—[p. 391].

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good Christian, carefully imitating God, is his best statue[f].

Yea, the Fathers were so far from practising worship of images, that some of them condemn the simple making of them; calling the art of doing it a fallacious art, introduced by the Devil, and forbidden by God; expounding this commandment so, as that in it not only the worshipping, but the forming any similitude is forbidden; *Moses*, saith Clemens Alexandrinus[g], *did of old expressly give law, that no carved, or fusile, or plastered, or painted portraiture, or imagery should be made; that we should not attend to sensible things, but pass to things intelligible:* and Tertullian[h] in several places saith the same. Whether their exposition (concurring, it seems, with the common opinion of the Jews in their time) were true, I shall not now discuss; that making any similitudes in order to worship is prohibited, is most evident.

In fine, divers of the Fathers say, that all the commands in the Decalogue, excepting the Sabbath, do continue in force as naturally obligatory, and as confirmed by the Christian law: for instance, St Augustine, in his 119th Epistle, speaketh thus; *The other precepts* (excepting the Sab-

[f] Cf. pp. 389—391. Vid. Tertull. de Idol. capp. 3, 4. [Opp. pp. 85, 86.]

[g] Μωσῆς πρόπαλαι διαρρήδην ἐνομοθέτησεν μηδὲν δεῖν γλυπτὸν, ἢ χωνευτὸν, ἢ πλαστὸν, ἢ γραπτὸν, ἄγαλμά τε καὶ ἀπεικόνισμα ποιεῖσθαι· εἰς μὴ αἰσθητοῖς προσανέχοιμεν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ νοητὰ μετίωμεν, &c.—Strom. Lib. v. p. 408.

Οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε ὁ μηδὲ γλυπτὸν εἴδωλον δημιουργεῖν παραινέσας, αὐτὸς ἀπεικόνιζεν τῶν ἁγίων ἄγαλμα.—p. 411.

[h] De Spectac. cap. 23. De Idol. per tot. Con. Marc. II. 22. Vid. Iren. IV. 31, 32.

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bath) *there* (in the Decalogue) *we do observe properly, as they are commanded, without any figurate observation; for we have manifestly learned, not to worship idols; and not to take the name of the Lord our God in vain, to honour father and mother, &c. do not figurately pretend one thing and mystically signify another thing, but are so observed as they sound*[i].

But so much for the prohibition: I shall add, that we may conceive this positive precept implied, and intended here; that in our devotions and religious services of God, we should raise our mind above gross sense and fancy; that we should entertain high and worthy conceptions of God; that we should apprehend him incomparably superior to all things which we do see or know; that we direct our minds unto him as to a Being transcendently perfect in goodness, justice, wisdom, and power, above what we can comprehend and think; that which our Saviour calls worshipping God in spirit and truth; which is (as I take it) the special positive duty of this commandment.

John iv. 23, 24.

I need not further to urge, how presumptuous and dangerous the practices of those men are, who, (to the great danger and scandal of Christianity among Jews, and Mahometans, and men of other Religions,) notwithstanding these commandments

[i] [Cetera tamen ibi præcepta proprie sicut præcepta sunt, sine ulla figurata significatione observamus. Nam et idola non colere manifeste didicimus; et non accipere in vanum nomen Domini Dei nostri: et honorare matrem et patrem et non mœchari &c.—non figurate aliud prætendunt, et mystice aliud significant; sed sic observantur ut sonant.—[Ep. LV. ad Jan. Opp. Tom. II. col. 136 D. Ed. Bened.] Vid. Cont. Faust. XV. 4, [Tom. VIII. col. 274—6,] XV. 7, [Ibid. col. 278,] et XIX. 18, [Ibid. col. 323.]

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of God, backed with others of the same import, frequently occurring in the Holy Scripture, (never, that we find any intimation of, repealed or relaxed,) particularly against that signal one made use of by our Saviour, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,* Luke iv. 8. *and him only shalt thou serve;* without any ancient good authority or example, without any necessity or good reason inducing, do not only yield themselves, but violently force others to yield unto angels, and unto the souls of dead men, (men of dubious state in reference to God, not having passed the last trial and judgment, the result whereof it is a profane temerity in us peremptorily to anticipate,) all kinds of worship, both internal (reposing trust and hope in them of obtaining benefits from them; attributing unto them in their esteem the knowledge and power which, for all that we can know, are incommunicably proper unto God himself) and external, of prayer and invocation, of praise and thanksgiving; and not only thus, as to the substance, imparting a kind of divine worship to them, but, as to the manner, erecting images of them, even in the places devoted to God's own service, and affording to them the same expressions of reverence and respect, that we do or can present unto God himself, (with great solemnity dedicating such images to them, with huge care and cost decking them, with great semblance of devotion saluting them, and casting themselves down before them; carrying them in procession, exposing them to the people, and making long pilgrimages to them;) so that instead of the spiritual worship of God himself, peculiarly required of Christians, and to which our Religion

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is perfectly suited; a Religion chiefly employing sense and fancy, and for the greatest part directed unto the representations of creatures, is substituted, in despite, as it were, and in defiance of these commandments; the plain force of which they endeavour to elude and evade by slender pretences and subtle distinctions, by the like to which there is no law which may not as easily be rendered insignificant and invalid; never in the mean time considering, that these laws were not given to employ the wits of sophisters and Schoolmen, but to direct the practice of rude and plain people; to which purpose no law, after such artists have had the handling of it, can signify anything; nothing being so clear, which by their cavillations and quirks they cannot confound; nothing so smooth, wherein they cannot find or make knots.

There is subjoined to these two commandments (as we reckon them; others have accounted them but one[k]; and their opinion is somewhat counte-

[k] Aug. [Quæritur, decem præcepta Legis quemadmodum dividenda sunt: utrum quatuor sint usque ad præceptum de Sabbato, quæ ad ipsum Deum pertinent; sex autem reliqua, quorum primum est, *Honora patrem*, &c.: quæ ad hominem pertinent; an potius illa tria sint, et ista septem. Qui enim dicunt illa quatuor esse, separant quod dictum est, *Non erunt tibi dii alii præter me*: ut aliud præceptum sit, *Non facies tibi idolum*, &c.: ubi figmenta colenda prohibentur.

Mihi tamen videtur congruentius accipi tria illa et ista septem, quia et Trinitatem videntur illa quæ ad Deum pertinent insinuare diligentius intuentibus, &c.—Quæst. in Exod. Lib. II. Qu. LXXI. Opp. Tom. III. p. 1, col. 443 c.]

Bede [Dominus denique legem in decem verba constituit. Nullus numerus crescit amplius, nisi usque ad decem: si enim viginti numeraveris, decem habes: si triginta, decem triplicabis: et sic invenies quantumcunque progressus fueris, et per hoc in plenitudine numeri plenitudinem mandatorum constituit, quæ sci-

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nanced by what is added here seeming to bear a common respect to both; there is, I say, subjoined) a reason, or rather a contexture of reasons, strongly pressing and encouraging to obedience, deterring and discouraging from disobedience to them, or, indeed, generally to all God's commandments, but especially unto these, most immediately relating to him:

For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God[a];

I am a jealous God; that is, a God very tender of my honour, and of my right; who am impatient of any mate, or competitor, in respect to those duties which properly and incommunicably belong unto me; *I am,* saith God in the Prophet Isaiah, *the Lord: that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven images.* This jealousy doth contain in it, not only a strong dislike, but a fierce displeasure against the infringers of these laws; *For the Lord thy God* (saith Moses in Deuteronomy, pressing the observance of this same precept, concerning the worship of images) *is a consuming fire, he is a jealous God:* and if God be thus jealous, so easily

Isai. xlii. 8.

Deut. iv. 24.

licet mandata sic quidam distinguunt, ut tria pertineant ad dilectionem Trinitatis, septem vero ad amorem fraternum—Primum mandatum pertinet ad Deum Patrem, dum dicit, Ego sum Dominus Deus tuus, non habebis deos alienos, &c.—Expos. in Exod. Opp. Tom. IV. col. 111.]

[a] —*a jealous God;* am *El kanah, fortis zelotes,* as the Vulgar Latin reads it: it may seem to have been a name of God, implying, as all the other names of God do, some attribute of God; for it is in the 34th of Exodus said, *Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord, whose name is Jealous,* or *Kana, is a jealous God.*—Exod. xxxiv. 14.

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provoked to indignation by our detracting his due honour, and imparting it to any other, we have great reason to be afraid of incurring the guilt of either; for *Who can stand in his sight, when he is angry?* who can support the effects of his displeasure?

Ps. lxxvi. 7.

Visiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me;

Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation: God doth not only punish those persons themselves, who commit notorious and heinous sins, (such as these of idolatry and profaneness, whereby he is publicly wronged and dishonoured,) but the more to deter men, (who naturally bear much regard to their posterity, and are afraid to be, ashamed to appear, the causes of ruin and calamity to their family,) he declareth, that in respect to their doings it shall go ill with their posterity; they shall therefore be more strictly and severely dealt with; they shall upon this score be capable of less favour and mercy from God, than otherwise they might have been: for we must not hereby understand, that God will arbitrarily inflict undeserved pains upon the children of bad men for the faults of their ancestors, (God doth expressly disclaim such kind of proceeding; *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; the soul that sinneth it shall die;* saith he in the Prophet: and, *Every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge,*) but that he will upon that account with-

Ezek. xviii. 20.

Jer. xxxi. 30.

Deut. xxiv. 16.

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draw his free favours from them; that measure of grace and indulgence, which otherwise the son of such a person (had he not been a great traitor against God) might, according to the general course of God's goodness, have received, the which might have more effectually restrained him from sin, and consequently have prevented his guilt and his punishment, God may well (in consistence with his justice and goodness, to manifest his detestation of heinous wickedness) withhold from him. Such a son, if he do fall into personal offences, (for that also is to be understood; otherwise, such is the goodness of God, that he hath declared, *If a son seeing his father's sins, and considering, doeth not the like, he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, but shall surely live;* if, I say, he falleth into personal sins,) God will visit; that is, will use a close inspection and animadversion upon him, will severely punish and avenge his sin; not only upon his own, but on his father's account; examples of which proceeding do in the divine histories frequently occur; in Solomon, in Jeroboam, in Baasha, in Ahab, in Jehu, and in others.

Ezek. xviii. 14, 17.

1 Kings xi. 35; xiv. 13; xiii. 34; xiv. 10; xvi. 3; xxi. 29. 2 Kings ix. 8; x. 30; xv. 12.

Of them that hate me: We may observe, that in the Scripture style the transgressors of God's laws are termed haters and enemies of God; because their actions signify a disposition of mind in them repugnant to the mind of God; and because by them they resist and oppose God's will: no wonder then if God deal thus severely with them.

Job xxvii. 14.

But God not only deters from disobedience by threatening a train of punishments, but he encourageth to obedience by a declaration of his

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intention, or promise, graciously to reward, not only upon the obedient persons themselves, but upon their posterity for ever, in a manner, unto thousands, that is, unto a thousand descents:

Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Vid. Deut. vii. 9.

Shewing mercy: God doth not absolutely promise, that he will forbear to punish the posterity of good men, in case they offend, but that he will shew mercy, and deal the more favourably with them in that respect: his meaning and method in these cases are plainly represented in those words concerning David; *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him:* God declares he will punish the offending children of very good men, yet so that their misdeeds shall not interrupt his kindness toward the rest of their posterity, or abolish his remembrance of their goodness: so we may see God dealt with Abraham and the patriarchs, passing by (in memory of their love and reverence to him, and their faithful obedience to his will) the manifold provocations of their posterity; so that he did not for a long tract of time, and after many generations passed, suffer them (according as their personal demeanour highly deserved) to incur ruin: upon this consideration he brought them out of Egypt, he settled them in Canaan, he frequently delivered them from their

Ps. lxxxix. 30—34. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.

Isai. xlv. 4. Ps. cv. 42. Deut. iv. 37. Lev. xxvi. 42. Exod. ii. 24.

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enemies, he restored them from oppressions and captivities; as is often expressed and insinuated in Scripture. So also it is frequently mentioned, that for David's sake, his posterity, although highly provoking God by their miscarriages, was protected and preserved; I cannot stand to mention places. I shall only further note, that which is very obvious and most remarkable here, the difference between God's proceeding in way of severity and in way of favour; by a vast proportion the expressions of God's mercy do exceed those of justice, although both insisting upon like or correspondent grounds: He visiteth the iniquities of disobedient fathers unto the third or fourth generation, but he sheweth mercy to a thousand generations of those that love and obey him; he soon forgetteth the wrongs done, but he long retaineth in memory the services performed to him: which consideration should work upon our ingenuity, and engage us willingly to obey so gracious a Lord.

1 Kings xi. 12, 34; xv. 4. Ps. xviii. 50. Isai. xxxvii. 35.

It is also observable, that as disobedience is styled hatred of God, so loving God and keeping his commandments are conjoined as terms equivalent: they are, indeed, inseparably connected, love being a certain cause of obedience, obedience an infallible sign of love; *He that hath my commandments, and observeth them, he it is,* saith our Saviour, *that loveth me:* and, *If any man love me, he will keep my word.* But I pass forward to the next.

John xiv. 21, 15; ver. 23.

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III. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

It consisteth, we see, of a precept, and of a reason deterring from disobedience thereto, by declaring or threatening the mischief ensuing thereon.

The precept is, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain:* it might be rendered, *Thou shalt not bring the name of the Lord thy God to a vanity,* (or *to a lie,* for so the word שוא, *shaveh,* frequently importeth;) that is, (as it seems interpreted in a parallel place, where most of these laws are repeated, inculcated, and fenced by additional injunctions,) *Thou shalt not swear in my name to a falsehood;* and in the 24th Psalm, *to lift up one's soul to vanity,* is explained by *swearing* לרמה (*lemirmah*) *to deceit, or falsehood.* Josephus[a] expresseth it by ἐπὶ μηδενὶ φαύλῳ τὸν Θεὸν ὀμνύναι, *to adjure God to no bad matter,* (or *to no false matter,* as the word φαῦλος commonly in good writers is taken.) And our Lord himself in his Sermon on the Mount seemeth to respect this law, when he says, *Ye have heard that it was said to the ancients,* Οὐκ ἐπιορκήσεις, *Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt render to the Lord thine oaths;* for he doth immediately before cite other passages out of the Decalogue, (*Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery,*) with intention to explain or extend them; and therefore probably he proceeds respecting this law, the most conspicuous of all those

Lev. xix. 12. Ps. xxiv. 4.

Matt. v. 33.

[a] Antiq. III. 4.

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which relate to this matter; and if this law be (as some conceive) supposed to signify more strictly, it had been more suitable to his purpose to cite it, than any other of more lax importance; his drift being plainly to extend in matter, and to straiten in obligation, even the fullest and strictest of ancient laws, at least as they were then commonly expounded and understood; yea, even in this case, our Lord seemeth to affirm, that the ancients had no law strict and perfect enough for evangelical practice; considering which things, it is probable, that the prime intent of this law is to prohibit that great sin of perjury, that is, of invoking God's attestation to a lie; thereupon appealing to him, as witness and judge, that what we assert is true; as a surety, that what we promise we do stedfastly resolve and shall faithfully endeavour to perform; implying also, that we do expect a curse, and vengeance from him upon us, if we be found knowingly to falsify in our affirmation, or wilfully to violate our promise[b].

Swearing is in its own nature immediately an act of Religion, and as such was enjoined by God: *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name;* it expresseth the pious persuasion we have concerning God's chief attributes and prerogatives; of his omnipresence and omniscience; (extending to the knowledge of our most inward thoughts and secret purposes;) of his watchful providence over what we do; of his justice and fidelity in maintaining truth and right, in avenging iniquity and falsehood: the reason of using it was derived from, or grounded upon, a persuasion about God, which hath ever been

Deut. vi. 13; x. 20.

[b] Πᾶς ὅρκος εἰς κατάραν τελευτᾷ τῆς ἐπιορκίας.

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common among men, that God, the governor and judge of the world, the protector and patron of right, is always ready, upon our invocation and reference unto him, to undertake the cognizance of matters in debate and controversy between men, for the protection of truth, the maintenance of right, and preservation of peace among them; (*An oath*, saith the Apostle, *for confirmation is an end of all strife;*) so that the use thereof becometh a main instrument of promoting these purposes, the strongest tie of fidelity, the surest ground to proceed upon in administration of justice, the most sacred band of all society; which therefore he that shall presume to violate, doth not only most unworthily wrong this or that person, this or that society of men, but doth what in him lies to subvert the foundations of all public justice and peace; withal most impiously abusing and affronting God Almighty himself; profaning his most sacred ordinance, making his name instrumental to the compassing his deceitful and base purposes, despising his judgment, and defying his vengeance.

Heb. vi. 16.

This seems to be the first and direct meaning of this law; but it may by parity of reason well be extended further, so as we may hereby understand all light and vain swearing, all wanton and irreverent use of God's holy name: and hitherto our Lord hath plainly extended it, forbidding us to swear at all, and charging us in our conversation to use only the simple and plain manner of assertion, or promise, saying only, *Yea, yea,* or *Nay, nay;* without presuming upon any slight occasion to introduce the holy name of God; which, indeed, we should not without extreme awe of spirit ever think upon, nor without high veneration dare to

Matt. v. 37.

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mention: it is an instance of the most sottish folly, it is an argument of the most horrible impiety that can be, thus (without any cause, or temptation thereto, without any profit or pleasure thence) to trifle with the divine Majesty; to abuse his glorious name, and provoke his dreadful vengeance; *Who will in no wise hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

IV. COMMANDMENT.

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, &c.

The Decalogue is in several places of Scripture (as we before noted) called a covenant with the Jewish people, and the observation of this law is likewise so called in a particular and special manner: it is expressed to have been appointed as a sign, or characteristical note, whereby their peculiar relation to God might be discerned, and they distinguished from all other people. As circumcision was a seal of the covenant made with Abraham and his posterity; so keeping the Sabbath did obsignate the covenant made with the children of Israel after their delivery out of Egypt; *The children of Israel,* saith the text, *shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant: it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever:* and, *I gave them* (saith God in Ezekiel) *my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them: moreover I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord, who sanctifies them:* and, *Thou camest down from* Exod. xxxi. 16. Ezek. xx. 11, 12, 20. Neh. ix. 13, 14.

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mount Sinai, (say the Levites in Nehemiah,) *and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: and madest known unto them thy holy sabbaths:* where making known to them the Sabbaths, as also otherwhere giving them the Sabbath, are expressions, (together with the special ends of the Sabbath's appointment, which are mentioned in those places,) confirming the judgment of the ancient Christians, Justin Martyr[a], Irenæus[b], Tertullian[c], &c. who refer the first institution of the Sabbath to Moses, affirming (that which, indeed, the history by its total silence concerning the Sabbath before him sufficiently doth seem to confirm) that the patriarchs were not obliged thereto, nor did practise it.

Exod. xvi. 29.

And we may observe, that the law concerning the Sabbath is mentioned and insisted upon separately from the body of their laws, as being in nature different from the rest, and enacted upon a special design; as from the forecited passages appeareth; and further may appear from considering how the condition of proselytes (those of the stricter sort, called *Proselytes of righteousness*) is described in Isaiah; *The sons of the strangers,* saith God in that Prophet, *that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the*

Isai. lvi. 6, 7.

[a] Καὶ γὰρ μὴ σαββατίσαντες οἱ προωνομασμένοι πάντες δίκαιοι, τῷ Θεῷ ἐνηρέστησαν, &c.—[Dial. cum Tryph. § 19. Opp. p. 119 B.]

Ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ ἤρξατο περιτομὴ, καὶ ἀπὸ Μωσέως σάββατον, καὶ θυσίαι, καὶ προσφοραί, &c.—[Ibid. p. 138 E.]

[b] Abraham sine circumcisione, et sine observatione sabbatorum credidit Deo, &c.—Iren. IV. 30. [cap. 16, p. 246. Ed. Bened.]

[c] [Sed Abraham, inquit, circumcisus est. Sed ante Deo placuit quam circumcideretur, nec tamen Sabbatizavit.]—Ad Jud. cap. 2. [Opp. p. 185 B.]

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sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: where to undertake the observance of the Sabbath, and to lay hold of the Jewish covenant, are signified to be coincident, or especially coherent.

All the other precepts, indeed, (one passage in the second commandment, as it may be understood to prohibit absolutely the making of any similitude, being liable to exception) are immediately grounded in the reason of the thing, and have a necessary obligation, even visible to natural light; they consequently have been acknowledged as reasonable and obliging by the general consent of men; or might be so propounded and asserted by argument, as easily to extort such consent: but this command, (although as to its general and remote matter it is most evidently reasonable, and requireth that which no man can deny to be matter of necessary duty, yet,) as to the more immediate matter, as to the determinate measure and manner of performing those general duties, no reason can discern an obligation distinct from, or antecedent to, the Lawgiver's will, to practise according thereto: that we should frequently with grateful and joyful sense reflect upon the glorious works of God; (especially that grand and fundamental one, wherein God's wonderful excellencies of goodness, wisdom, and power, were so illustriously displayed, the creation of the world; wherein so great accommodations and benefits were generally dispensed to all the creatures, and to us eminently among them; remembering with deepest respect and most hearty thankfulness our

Ps. cxliii. 5; xcii. 4; cvii. 22; xxvi. 7; cxlv. 10.

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bountiful Maker;) that we should not be unmindful of the special favours by God's gracious providence vouchsafed to our country, our relations, ourselves; (especially such very signal ones, as was that of the delivery from Egyptian slavery in a manner so remarkable and miraculous;) that we should not spend ourselves and our time in perpetually carking and labouring about affairs touching our body and this present life; but should assign some competent time both for the relaxation of our mind, and for attendance to the concernments of our soul: that also we should allow fitting time of respite and refreshment to those of our brethren, whom Divine Providence hath disposed into a meaner condition and relation of servants to us; that their lives may not by incessant care and toil be rendered over-burdensome and grievous to them, but so that they may with some comfort serve us; that also they be not destituted of leisure and opportunity to serve God, our common master, and to regard the welfare of their souls, no less precious than our own; that also we should shew some kindness and mercy even toward our beasts, allowing them some ease from their painful drudgeries in our behalf: these are all of them things which reason evidently dictates, which common sense must needs admit, as duties of piety, justice, and humanity: and to secure the performance of them, both as to the substance, due measure, and fit manner of them, common prudence would suggest, that set times should be appointed; in which they should be solemnly and notoriously discharged, under the public testimony and cognizance: and accordingly

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we find that, in all wise and civil societies, some provision ever hath been made, by appointing festival times, for the practice of such duties, in some kind or degree; *The founders of laws,* saith Seneca, *did institute festival days, that men should publicly be constrained to cheerfulness; interposing, as necessary, a temperament of their pains*[d]: Plato, with a more admirable sagacity, refers the invention, or first institution, of such times unto God himself; *The gods* (saith he; that is, the Divine Providence administering affairs here by the ministry of inferior invisible powers, according to his notion and manner of speaking) *pitying mankind, born to painful labour, appointed, for an ease and cessation from their toils, the recourses of festival seasons observed to the gods*[e]. Thus, I say, reason acknowledges the substance of these duties, and approves the securing their performance, as a good end, or fit matter of law, both Divine and human. But as to the circumstantial determination of measure and manner; that a seventh day precisely should be assigned, that a total cessation from labour for man and beast should be prescribed; this is above reason to discern a necessity of, or a conveniency in comparison with other limitations in those respects devisable and practicable: nor can we assuredly resolve the obligation thereto into any other ground than the pleasure of the most wise Author of this law, who did see

[d] Legum conditores festos instituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur; tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum.—De Tranq. An. [cap. xv.]

[e] Θεοὶ δὲ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος ἀναπαύλας τε αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξαντο τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς.—De Leg. II. [653 D.]

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what was most fit to be prescribed to those whom this law concerned. Here is, indeed, mentioned a reason, why God especially did choose this day to bless, and sanctify it in this manner to such purposes; namely, his resting upon the seventh day from his works of creation; the which yet doth not certainly import a natural conveniency, toward accomplishing those purposes, of this precise quantity of time, or in this way of observing it, in preference to any other that might have been appointed; it only seemeth to imply a fitness of these determinations, as containing somewhat of profitable significancy, that such a correspondency in circumstance of time, and manner of practice, might admonish us concerning the substance of our duty, or a principal part thereof, peculiarly designed in the sanction of this law, the grateful commemoration of God's most glorious work, (the foundation, as it were, of all other his acts of beneficence,) the creation of the world: for thus in all ceremonial institutions we may observe, that some significant circumstance is selected on purpose to instruct or excite us to practice, by representing to our fancy the nature and intention of the main duty required; as in Circumcision, in the Passover, in Baptism, and other ritual constitutions, it is not hard to perceive: so it being God's design to enforce the performance of that excellent duty, by appropriating a time thereto; we may conceive, that he therefore especially selected that day, as most apt to mind them, to whom this law was given, of the history of the creation; the reflecting upon and celebrating which was the main duty intended.

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Seeing therefore the observation of the Sabbath is expressed to have a peculiar respect to the children of Israel, as a sign of the covenant made with them, when he led them out of Egypt; seeing in its own nature it differeth from the rest of the ten laws, the obligation thereto being not, discernibly to natural light, grounded in the reason of the thing, we can nowise be assured, that an universal and perpetual obligation thereto was intended, or that its obligation did extend further than to the Jews, to whom it was as a formal law delivered, and upon special considerations severely inculcated; to whose humour, condition, and circumstances, it might also perhaps be particularly suited: Justin Martyr[f] was of opinion that this law, as many others, was given to the Jews, *διὰ τὴν ἀνομίαν, καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν, For their iniquity, and hardness of heart,* by way of concession and indulgence; for, because they by their natural disposition were apt to forget their Maker; to neglect the state of their soul, being wholly intent on worldly affairs; to exact intolerable pains from their brethren, who served them; to use cruelly the poor beasts employed in tilling their ground, or bearing their burdens; therefore God (considering this incorrigible temper of theirs) did indulge six days to them for the prosecution of those affairs to which they were so devoted, contenting himself to exact from them no more than this part of time for his own service, for the

[f] Dial. cum Tryph. [*Ἡμεῖς γὰρ καὶ ταύτην ἂν τὴν περιτομὴν τὴν κατὰ σάρκα, καὶ τὰ σάββατα καὶ τὰς ἑορτὰς πάσας ἁπλῶς ἐφυλάσσομεν, εἰ μὴ ἴσμεν δι' ἣν αἰτίαν καὶ ὑμῖν προσετάγη, τουτέστι διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ὑμῶν καὶ τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν.*—§ 18. Opp. p. 118 c]

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benefit of servants and ease of beasts: if he had required more of them, they could, it seems, or would hardly have endured it; the command would perhaps not only have been disobeyed itself, but the dislike thereof might have rendered them averse from all Religion and service of God; as it happeneth, when commands very rigorous, and exceeding men's strength, are enjoined: for we see the Prophets complain of them, that they could hardly be induced to go thus far, or to afford God this so moderate share of time; but were impatient even for this one day in seven to abstain from their secular business, to relax themselves, or their servants, or their cattle, from their daily labours: they impeach them for polluting, profaning, hiding, their eyes from (that is, wholly overlooking, neglecting, and disregarding) the Sabbath; for doing their own pleasure, and enacting their own labours upon it; for not delighting therein, or not willingly observing it: *Hear this*, saith the Prophet Amos, *O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath that we may set forth wheat?* This being the disposition of that people, not bearing a greater strictness, they not being able to preserve within their hearts a perpetual remembrance of God's works and favours; not to moderate their pursuits of temporal good things; not to bear a due regard and tenderness toward their brethren and their fellow-creatures; (the performing which things in a constant uninterrupted tenor, the said holy Father and blessed Martyr supposeth to be

Isai. lviii. 3, 13. Ezek. xx. 13, 21; xxii. 26; xxiii. 38.

Amos viii. 4, 5.

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the Sabbatism[g] which Christians are bound to observe;) therefore God, considering their infirmity and incapacity to comply with higher injunctions, did use (as in the cases of divorce, revenge, and the like) an indulgence toward them, permitting them on the other days to do their pleasure, as the Prophet speaks, reserving only this day for a punctual and solemn performance of the duties specified: thus discourses that good ancient in his Dialogue with the Jew. However, that this law (as to its circumstantial parts) was not intended to oblige generally and perpetually, we have a most forcible ground to suppose; St Paul himself, his express discharging Christians from the observation thereof; yea, his earnest reprehension of some persons for rigorously insisting thereon, deeming it themselves, and urging it upon others, as a necessary duty to observe it; his conjoining it with other ceremonial observances, whose nature was merely symbolical, and whose design was to continue no longer, than till the real substance of that which they represented came into full force and practice; *Let no man,* saith he to the Colossians, *judge you for meat, or drink, or upon account of a festival day, or new moon, or sabbath*[h]*: which things are the shadow of future things; but the body is of Christ;* (that is, they did only prefigure and presignify; the real substance intended and represented by them is somewhat in the law and doctrine of Christ; which coming immediately to appear and to oblige, that shadow vanisheth, and ceaseth to have any regard due thereto:) again

Isai. lviii. 13.

Col. ii. 16, 17.

[g] Σαββατίζειν ὑμᾶς ὁ καινὸς νόμος διαπαντὸς ἐθέλει. [Ibid. p. 112 E.]

[h] Σαββάτων and σαββάτου are both read; both equivalent.

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more sharply to the Galatians, whom some Judaizing dogmatists had reduced, or were reducing to the practice of legal rites, under conceit of needful obligation to them; *How,* saith he, *do ye return again to those weak and beggarly elements, to which back again you are pleased to be enslaved? Ye observe days, and months, and years:* which words, that they relate generally to the Jewish festivals, the context doth plainly enough shew, and there is good reason to think, that they chiefly respect the Sabbath we treat on, for which probably these men had the greatest respect and zeal: again in the 14th to the Romans, the same great patron and champion of Christian liberty not obscurely declareth his mind, that Christians of strength in judgment did regard no day above another, but esteemed all days (he excepteth none) alike, as to any special obligation, grounded upon Divine law and right; in subordination to which doctrine we may add, that this appears with great evidence to have been the common opinion of the wisest and most orthodox Christians in the primitive Church[1], the most constant and strict adherents to catholic tradition, (who from the Apostles' instruction best understood the purport and limits of the liberty purchased by Christ,) that this law, as it was not known or practised before Moses, so it ceased to oblige after Christ; being one of the shadows which the evangelical light dispelled, one of the burdens which this law of liberty did take off us.

Gal. iv. 9, 10.

Rom. xiv. 5, &c.

Now although upon these accounts we cannot

[1] Inter omnia illa decem præcepta solum ibi, quod de Sabbato positum est, figurate, observandum præcipitur.—Aug. Ep. CXIX. [LV. ad Jan. Opp. Tom. II. col. 146 C. Ed. Bened.]

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press the strict observation of this law in all its parts, according to its literal and direct intention, yet we may learn much of our duty, much of God's will from it; all God's laws, spiritually and wisely understood, did tend to the promoting of piety and virtue; and, abstracting from the special circumstances of that people, to whom they were consigned, may, (so far as our case is like theirs, and wherein a common reason doth appear,) pass for fit patterns for us to imitate, suggesting proper means of exercising, nourishing, increasing those qualities in us; and so from this law we may learn these duties:

1 That we should frequently call to mind and consider the great and glorious works of God, performed for the general good of his creatures, and specially for mankind: the creation of the world; the redemption of mankind; the nativity, passion, resurrection, and exaltation of our Lord and Saviour, and the like, no less now considerable to us, both in respect of glory due to God and of benefit accruing to us, than was the creation formerly to the Jews.

2 That we are bound to restrain ourselves in the prosecution of worldly business; not distracting our minds with care, not exhausting our bodies with toil about them; but allowing our mind convenient and seasonable freedom, affording our souls sufficient leisure with vigour and alacrity to enjoy its nobler entertainments, and to pursue its higher interests.

3 That we are obliged to use the same indulgence toward those whom Divine Providence hath disposed to be under our power, care, or

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governance; to allow our children, our subjects, our servants, a competent measure of rest and refreshment from their ordinary labours, sufficient time and leisure undistractedly to serve God, and quietly to mind their spiritual welfare: we must so charitably tender their good, as to permit and procure that their life may be easy and comfortable here; and that also they may have means to obtain for themselves a happy immortality hereafter; not being in these respects either harsh to their outward man, or uncharitable to their souls.

4 That we must not be unmerciful to any creature; not only abstaining from inflicting, in wantonness of humour, needless vexation upon them, but also from wearying and grieving them too much for our emolument or convenience; the advantage and preeminency bestowed upon us by God over them should be managed with moderation and clemency; we should be gentle masters to them, not cruel tyrants over them: we should consider that God did make them, as to help and serve us, so to enjoy somewhat themselves of delight and satisfaction in their being; which if we go to deprive them of, rendering their condition intolerable, and worse than if they had no being, as we do abuse and injure them, transgressing the bounds of our right over them, so we encroach upon, disappoint, and wrong their Maker, and cannot therein but displease him; doing thus is a point of injustice not enough considered by them who commit it: they consider not how beastly they are themselves, when they misuse poor beasts.

5 We may hence further learn, that it is fit certain times should be allotted for the public and

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solemn performance of the forenamed duties: common reason prompteth, that God (upon whose protection and disposal the public good depends) should be publicly honoured, and his benefits frequently acknowledged; also that care should be taken in every society, that all states of men should lead their lives in some competent degree of content; that all objects of grievous pity should be removed from public view; also common sense will inform us, that these things cannot effectually be executed without constituting definite periods of time, and limiting circumstances, according to which they shall be practised under public inspection and censure: and these dictates of ordinary prudence the Divine Wisdom hath ratified by his exemplary order; the which, in cases wherein he hath not interposed his direct authority by way of precept, may serve for a good direction to governors, what they may with safety, what they should in wisdom, establish; what provision they should make for the promotion of piety and virtue: such a precedent requires greatest veneration and respect, cannot but appear of high moment in consultation about matters of this nature.

It is, indeed, particularly observable, that in this command there is not an express order concerning the natural or moral service of God (by prayer, or hearing God's Law) to be publicly performed on this day; but the Jews were themselves so wise, as to understand these duties couched in the sanctification of the day prescribed to them: and accordingly they practised; they in all places of their habitation did settle synagogues and oratories; to them upon this day they resorted; in

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them then they did offer devotions to God, (as the names προσευχαί, and προσευκτήρια do import;) the Scribes did read the Law, and expound it to the people: *Moses,* saith Josephus, *did command the people to assemble for hearing of the Law, not once, or twice, or many times, but every seventh day, laying aside their works, and exactly to learn it*[k]; whence, addeth he, the people became so skilful in the laws, that *If one asked any of them concerning them, he would more easily tell them all than his own name*[l]; whence also an admirable concord in mind and uniformity in practice did, as he further observes, arise: and, *The custom,* saith Philo, *was always as occasion gave leave, especially upon the seventh days, to philosophate*[m], &c. In consideration of which practice it was, that the Jews so highly valued this precept, that it was a saying among them, *The Sabbath weigheth against all the commandments*[n]; as procuring them all to be known and observed. And if that blind people could pick these duties out of this law, much more should we see ourselves obliged, according to the analogy thereof, to appoint set times for ensuring the practice of them.

6 Again; we may hence also learn our obligation to submit obediently to the constitution of governors relating to this matter; that we readily

[k] Οὐκ εἰσάπαξ ἀκροασαμένους, οὐδὲ δὶς, ἢ πολλάκις, ἀλλ' ἑκάστης ἑβδομάδος τῶν ἔργων ἀφεμένους, ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκρόασιν τοῦ νόμου ἐκέλευσε συλλέγεσθαι, καὶ τοῦτον ἀκριβῶς ἐκμανθάνειν.—Adv. App. II. [§ 17.]

[l] Ἡμῶν δ' ὀντινοῦν εἴ τις ἔροιτο τοὺς νόμους, ῥᾷον ἂν εἴποι πάντα, ἢ τοὔνομα τὸ ἑαυτοῦ.—Ibid. [§ 18.]

[m] Ἔθος γὰρ ἦν ἀεὶ μὲν κατὰ τὸ παρεῖκον, προηγουμένως δὲ ταῖς ἑβδόμαις, φιλοσοφεῖν, &c.—De Vit. Mos. [Lib. III. § 27. Opp. Tom. II. p. 167. Ed. Manq.]

[n] Midrash.

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should observe all solemn times of festivity and rest, which the rulers of Church or State do appoint for the securing or the promoting those purposes of piety or charity, according to the measure and manner prescribed by them; for reason approving the thing as good and useful, and Divine order more clearly and fully confirming it to be so, and it not appearing that God hath made express determinations about it, it remains, that it is left wholly to them to whose care God hath intrusted the public welfare, and hath committed to their judgments the providing means conducible thereto; having also consequently enjoined us in all lawful things to follow their guidance and appointment in order thereto. God decreed death to be inflicted on those who violated his command concerning the Sabbath, which sheweth how great a fault it is to offend in this particular; and we may reasonably esteem that command to be his, which proceedeth from his ministers by authority from himself, and in conformity to his own pattern.

We add, that whereas God required of the Jews such a portion of time to be solemnly dedicated to Religion and mercy, we, to whom he hath vouchsafed higher benefits, and proposed greater encouragements, cannot reasonably but deem ourselves obliged to sequester and consecrate as much or more time to the same intents; we should, indeed, be content to withdraw ourselves more frequently from pursuance of our own profits and pleasures to the service of God, to the remembrance and celebration of his favours; we should willingly allow greater relaxation to our dependents: and should the public be deficient in exacting a per-

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formance of such duties from us, it would become us to supply such defects by our private devoting fit and frequent seasons thereto; that in some proportion we may exceed the Jews in grateful piety, as we surpass them in the matter and causes thereof; that we may appear in some degree more charitable than they, as we have much greater reason and obligation to be so than they. So much for this.

I proceed briefly to consider the remaining commandments, the which immediately concern another object: those foregoing did chiefly serve to regulate our religious practice in yielding due reverence toward God; these following (which are supposed to have made up the second of those Tables, which, written by God's hand, were delivered to Moses, and preserved in the ark of the testimony) to guide our conversation and carriage toward our neighbour; in the front of which worthily is placed that which obligeth to dutifulness toward our parents; unto whom, after God and his supreme vicegerents, we owe the highest respect, gratitude, and duty.

V. COMMANDMENT.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother.

Honour: the word signifies to have in weighty regard, and aptly serves to denote those particular acts of duty, which are otherwhere expressed in
Lev. xix. 3. Scripture; fear and reverence; *Ye shall fear every man his father and his mother:* observance and
Col. iii. 20. obedience; *Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to God:* gratitude
1 Tim. v. 4 and retribution; *Let children learn* τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον

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εὐσεβεῖν, *to be pious toward their own family; and* ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι, *to render suitable returns to,* or *to requite their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God:* regarding their instruction and advice; *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:* it also comprehendeth a prohibition of the contrary acts, contemning, cursing, offering violence or contumely unto, disobedience and contumacy toward parents, the which are forbidden under capital penalties and dreadful comminations; *Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or mother;* and, *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it;* (that is, God in a fearful and strange manner will avenge that wickedness upon him:) and in the Law it is ordained, that the rebellious and stubborn son, who will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him will not hearken unto them, shall be stoned by all the men of his city, and put to death in that manner.

Prov. i. 8; xxiii. 22.

Deut. xxvii. 16. Exod. xxi. 15, 17. Prov. xxx. 17.

Whence we may learn the nature of the duty here enjoined, and what rank it beareth among other duties; what high obligation belongs thereto, of what consideration it is with God, and how grievous a crime the violation thereof is; that, briefly, we are obliged to yield our parents high affection of heart, great expressions of respect and observance in word and deed; that the neglect of these duties is, next to that of profaneness and undutifulness toward God himself, the greatest disorder we can be guilty of: this all civil nations

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have consented to be our duty; and if we consider the grounds upon which it is built, we shall find that reason, justice, and necessity do require it: St Paul presseth his precept to observance of parents with a τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι δίκαιον, *For this is just and equal:* for if we look upon the disposition of parents in their mind toward children, we may presume them always full of tender affection and good-will toward them, full of desire and care for their good, full of pity and compassion toward them, in the highest and most especial degree beyond what they bear to others; which dispositions in reason and equity do require answerable dispositions in those upon whom they are placed, and who from them do receive inestimable benefits; for if we do regard the effects proceeding from them, we shall discern, that,

Eph. vi. 1.

1 From parents children do receive being and life; that good which nature inclineth so highly to value and tender, as the foundation of all the good, happiness, and comfort we are capable of.

2 They are obliged to their parents for the preservation, maintenance, and protection of their life: it is a long time before we come to be able (such is the particular condition of man among all living creatures, so ordered on purpose, as it were, to beget this obligation and endearment) anywise to provide for or to defend ourselves; and the doing thereof, in that senseless and helpless state, relies upon the care, pain, and solicitous vigilance of our parents; the which they are not only always obliged, but are commonly disposed, with admirable willingness, to spend on their children.

3 Parents not only thus at first undergo such care and trouble to maintain their children, but

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by expensive education (often with much inconvenience and incommodity to themselves) they provide means for their future support and subsistence during life.

4 Children are so strictly tied to their parents, as by their willing concession to partake in all the comforts of their state and ornaments of their fortune.

5 The goods acquired by the parents' industry do usually devolve upon their children by inheritance and succession; whence that children live handsomely and comfortably is the reward of their parents' merit, comes from the store that they have carefully provided and laid up for them.

6 To which we may add, that not only the provision for our temporal necessities and conveniences dependeth upon our parents, but the care of our souls, and our spiritual welfare is incumbent on them: they are obliged to instruct us in the fear of God, and to set us in the way toward eternal happiness. Deut. vi. 7, 20. Eph. vi. 4.

7 We may consider also, that all this they do most frankly, and out of pure kindness; without regard to any merit antecedent, or benefit consequent to themselves: as they received nothing to oblige and move them to such performances, so they can seldom hope for answerable returns: it is abundant satisfaction to them, if they see their children do well; their chief delight and contentment is in their children's good absolutely and abstractedly, without indirect regards to their own advantage.

Upon these, and the like accounts, it appeareth, that as parents have the affections most resembling

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those of God toward us, as they perform toward us the actions most like to his, as they are the principal instruments of divine providence and bounty, (by which God's blessings are conveyed and conferred upon us;) so they may be deemed in a sort to represent God, and, as his most lively images, have an especial veneration due to them. God himself, to endear and render himself amiable, or in the most kindly way venerable to us, to engage us to a more ready obedience of him, to declare the nature of our duty toward him, assumes the title of Father; and all nations have agreed to style him so: reciprocally also, whereas the duties toward other men are termed justice, or charity, or courtesy, or liberality, or gratitude, those toward parents in every language (I suppose) are styled piety, implying somewhat divine in the object of those duties; it is more than injustice to wrong a parent; it is more than uncharitableness to refuse them succour or relief; it is more than discourtesy to be unkind to them; it is more than sordid avarice to be in their need illiberal to them; it is rather high impiety to offend in any of these kinds.

Deut. xxxii. 6.

1 Tim. v. 4.

He that returns not love in answer to their tender affection; that doth not (as occasion requires, and his ability permits) requite the benefits received from them, doth not defer to them an especial reverence, in regard to that sacred name and character they bear, thereby intimates, that he would in like manner be unjust, ungrateful, and disingenuous toward God, from whom he hath received the like benefits; the beginning and continuance of his being; the preservation, maintenance, and protection of his life: if he will not

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honour his earthly parents, whom he hath seen, how will he reverence his heavenly Father, whom he hath not seen? so we may, according to St John, argue. 1 John iv. 20.

I might subjoin, that as justice and ingenuity do enforce this duty, so for the good of the world there is a necessity that it should be observed: if parents are not only by natural instinct disposed, but by divine command obliged, and by human law (the preservation of the world so requiring) constrained to undergo such hardships for the maintenance and education of their children, it is fit and necessary they should be supported and encouraged in the bearing them by reciprocal obligations in children to return them dutiful respect, observance, and requital; the world could not well subsist without children being engaged to these duties: there were no reason to exact, there were no ground to expect, that parents should cheerfully and faithfully discharge their part upon other terms.

To this precept there is added a promise; and it is, as St Paul observeth, the first precept that hath a promise formally annexed; whereby he enforceth his exhortation to the observance thereof. Eph. vi. 2.

That thy Days may be long upon the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

So God expressly promiseth to bless dutiful children with a long life in the comfortable possession of those good things which he should bestow upon them[o]; this was the most of reward,

[o] Ἱκανῶς βιώσεις γηροβοσκῶν τοὺς γονεῖς.

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explicitly covenanted to the Jews, in regard to their obedience: there is also implied a commination of a contrary curse from God upon the infringers of this law, that they should either be immaturely cut off from life, (as Abimelech and Absalom were upon this score,) or should draw on a wretched life in banishment from the contents thereof: by which things respectively are intimated to us the rewards of piety in this kind, or the punishments of impiety in the future state, whereof the land here mentioned was a shadow or figure: what length of days in Canaan was to them, that to us is immortal life in heaven; what being excluded thence was then, that now is everlasting death, or banishment into the regions of misery.

I might also note the congruity of the reward propounded, that they who are grateful to those from whom, in subordination to God, they received life, shall by God's dispensation enjoy that life long and well; and that they who neglect the authors of their life, shall soon be deprived of it, or of its comforts. But I find the same reward assigned to the diligent observers of other duties; particularly to them who are just in their dealings; to them who are charitable to the poor; to them who are meek and patient; to them who confide in God; and to all good men that obey God's commandments.

Deut. xvi. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 29, 9, 11; xxxiv. 12, 13, 16. Prov. viii. 21. Deut. xxvi. 15.

I shall only add, further, that we may, according to analogy and like ground of reason, reduce unto this commandment the obligation we have to honour all those who perform toward us beneficial offices like unto those which we receive from our

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parents; those who preserve our life by relief, protection, or defence; those who afford us maintenance or education; those who watch over us for the good of our body or of our soul; those who instruct us, or advise us: such are our governors and magistrates, either political or ecclesiastical; our benefactors and patrons; our schoolmasters and tutors; our especial faithful friends; and the like: but I pass forward.

In the subsequent precepts are contained the prime rules of justice toward our neighbour; the observation of which is not only most equal and reasonable in itself, but necessary for the preservation of civil society, and public peace among men; for the procurement of our safe and pleasant living and conversing in the world; men thereby being secured in the quiet enjoyment of God's gifts and the fruits of their industry, and of whatever is dear and precious to them; of their lives first; then of the comforts of their conjugal state; of their possessions; of their reputations; the laws respecting these being here disposed in order, according to the value of their respective objects, in the nature of things, or in the opinion of men, or in regard to the consequences arising from them.

VI. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

Of all good gifts conferred upon us, none (according to the natural and common esteem of men) is more precious than life itself, the foundation of enjoying the rest. God hath therefore reserved the disposal of it entirely to himself, as

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his special prerogative; neither he that hath it, nor any other person having absolutely any just power or right over it; no man can take away any man's life, but by commission or licence from God, reasonably presumed to be granted by him: so may God (the absolute King of the world) be supposed to have committed to lawful magistrates, as his vicegerents and officers, in his name and behalf, upon reasonable cause, for preservation of public justice, peace, and order, in a lawful course of justice, to dispose of men's lives, who have forfeited them to the law; (the magistrate, as St Paul saith, *Beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*) He hath not forbidden sovereigns (in case of necessity, and when amicable means will not prevail) to maintain the safety or welfare of the societies intrusted to their care, even by armed violence, against such as wrongfully invade them, or anywise harm them, and will not otherwise be induced to forbear doing so; in which case the resolution of such differences (insomuch as they cannot be tried at any other bar, or composed by other means) is referred to God's arbitrement; who is the Lord of Hosts, the sovereign protector of right, and dispenser of success; the soldier, in a just cause, being then his minister, and carrying a tacit commission from him. God also may be supposed, together with life, with a natural love to it, with means to preserve it, to have imparted to every man a right to defend his life, with its necessary supports, against unjust, extreme, and inevitable violence upon it, or them: the slaughter therefore which may happen in these

Rom. xiii. 4.
1 Pet. ii. 14.

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cases (or in the like, wherein God hath plainly by a general order, or by special command, or by permission reasonably supposed, conferred on any person a power over his neighbour's life, in the maintenance of God's own honour, or in subserviency to public good) is not concerned in the design or meaning of this precept: for he that kills another, in a way not irregular, as a minister of justice, or in a lawful war, as a soldier authorized by a sovereign power here under God, or for his own just and necessary defence, doth not, according to the intent of this law, kill; but rather God himself, the Lord of life and death, doth them kill; the authority of killing so being derived from him, and his work being done thereby; vengeance is his, and he so (by his instruments) repays it. [Rom. xii. 19.] But here is forbidden all other voluntary taking away our neighbour's life, when a man acts as a private person; without just and necessary cause, in any illegal or irregular way; upon what motive, principle, or end soever, (whether it be out of hatred, spite, envy, revenge; for our presumed safety, or pretended reparation of honour; for promoting what interest, or procuring what satisfaction soever to ourselves,) by what means soever, either by direct violence, or by fraudulent contrivance; in an open or clandestine manner; immediately by ourselves, or by means of others; by advising, encouraging, anywise becoming instrumental, or accessory thereto.

This is the crime expressly prohibited: but a positive duty should also be understood; that we are obliged, so far as we are able, to preserve our neighbour's life; by relieving him in extreme

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need, by succouring him in extreme danger; by admonishing him of any destructive mischief, when he appears tending unawares thereinto; the neglect of which thing argueth a murderous disposition toward our neighbour, is in reasonable esteem, and in God's sight a killing of him; for we mistake, if we think with Cain, that we are not our
Gen. iv. 9. brother's keepers, or are not bound, when we are able, to preserve his life.

The violation of which commandment is certainly the most heinous sin that can be committed of all those which are not immediately directed against God himself, or the persons which peculiarly represent him; and a sin which never can escape vengeance and due punishment from him. It is the greatest wrong to God; it is the extremest injury to our neighbour; it is the highest sort of uncharitableness; it is a principal offence against public society.

1 It is an exceeding wrong and affront done unto God; in assuming the disposal of his gifts; in dispossessing him of his rights, by robbing him of a creature, of his child, his servant, his subject, (one whose life is precious to him, and toward whom he beareth a tender regard;) an usurping in a high way his sovereign authority, his throne of majesty, his tribunal of justice, his sword of vengeance; to omit the sacrilege, as Philo speaks, committed herein by violating God's own image, which every man doth bear.

2 It is also an extreme injury to the person, who is thereby deprived of an unvaluable good, which can nowise be repaired or compensated: he that loses his life, doth therewith lose all the good

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he possesseth, or is capable of here, without any possibility of recovering it again: the taking therefore of life can be no suitable revenge, no reasonable satisfaction, for any injury or damage received; it infinitely, in a manner, surpasseth all the evil, which any man can sustain from another in his estate, or fame, or welfare of any kind; for those things have their measure, and may be capable of some reparation, but this is altogether extreme and irreparable; and therefore doth include greatest iniquity: add hereto, that not only all temporal good is hereby at once ravished from a man, but the soul also of the person may incur the greatest damage or hazard in respect to its future estate by being thus snatched away: the slayer not only robbeth his brother of his temporal life, but of his time of repentance, and opportunity of making peace with God.

3 It is also the highest uncharitableness to deal thus with our neighbour; arguing that nothing of good-will, of pity, of humanity toward him is left in us: to hate his brother to the death is the utmost pitch of hatred. If in imitation of our Saviour, and out of respect to him, we ought, as St John instructeth us, to be willing to lay down our lives for our brethren; how enormous a crime, how opposite to Christian charity is it, to take away our brother's life! 1 John iii. 16.

4 It is likewise a main offence against the public; not only by unlawful bereaving it of a member and subject, but to his prejudice and dishonour (yea, so far as lies in us to its subversion and dissolution) assuming to ourselves, pulling away from it, its rights and prerogatives of judgment.

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Such, briefly, is the direct intent and importance of this law: but our Saviour in his comment hereon hath explained and extended it further, so as to interdict all that anywise approaches in nature, or in effect tends unto this heinous evil: he means to obstruct all the springs, and extirpate all the roots thereof; such as are rash, causeless, outrageous, inveterate anger, contumelious and despiteful language, reserving grudges or spite in our heart, not endeavouring speedily to reconcile ourselves to them who have done us injury or displeasure; for these things, as they commonly do produce the act of murder, so they argue inclinations thereto, (which, if fear and self-respect did not restrain, would produce it,) and consequently in moral account, which regardeth not so much the act as the will, are of the same quality therewith; however they arise from the same bitter root of great uncharitableness; upon which score St John telleth us, that *He that hateth his brother is a murderer;* and consequently in effect all malice and spite, envy, hatred, malignity, rancour, immoderate and pertinacious anger and animosity are here prohibited.

Matt. v. 21, 22.

1 John iii. 15.

VII. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

After life, (if after that, for this command in the Greek translation of Exodus, though not in Deuteronomy, in some places of the New Testament, and in sundry ancient writers, is placed before that against murder,) nothing commonly is more dear to men, than the comforts of their con-

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jugal estate; the enjoyment of that special affection and friendship, together with those instances of benevolence, which by divine institution and mutual contract, ratified by most sacred and solemn promises of fidelity, are reserved peculiar to that state: which enclosures therefore of his neighbour whoever shall invade or trespass upon, who shall anywise loose or slacken those holy bands, who shall attempt the affection or chastity of his neighbour's wife, doth most grievously offend God, and committeth (as Joseph, when he was tempted thereto, did call it) a great evil against God, against his neighbour, against himself, against the common society of men. He violateth an institution, to which God hath affixed especial marks of respect and sanctity; he wounds his neighbour's honour and interest in the most tender part, wherein the content of his mind and comfort of his life are most deeply concerned. He as much (or rather more) dishonoureth and abuseth himself, not only by committing a fact of so high injustice, but by making himself accessory to the basest perfidiousness that can be: *Whoso committeth adultery lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.* He also offendeth against the public quiet and welfare, breeding inextricable confusions and implacable dissensions in families; so that hardly from any other cause such tragical events have issued as from this. In fine, this crime

Gen. xxxix. 9.

Prov. vi. 32—35.

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is, as Philo calls it, στυγητὸν, καὶ θεομίσητον ἀδίκημα, *A loathsome unrighteousness, most odious to God;* and, *A fire,* as Job representeth it, *that consumeth to destruction.*

Job xxxi. 12.

But we must further also consider, that acts of this kind contain also in them another evil; that persons committing them do not only so highly wrong their neighbour, but defile themselves also by the foulest turpitude; in which respect the prohibition of all unlawful and irregular satisfactions to lustful appetite; all compliance with that great enemy of our souls, the flesh; all kinds of impurity and lasciviousness, not in act only, but in thought, in speech, in gesture, may be reduced to this law: our Lord himself doth so interpret it, as to make it include a forbidding of all unchaste desires; and Christianity doth in a most strict and special manner oblige us to all kinds of sobriety and modesty, of chastity and purity in body and spirit; enjoining us to abstain from all fleshly lusts, as enemies to our souls; to mortify our fleshly members; to possess our vessels (or bodies) in sanctity and honour; not to have any impurity, or filthiness, so much as named among us; nor to suffer a foul word to proceed out of our mouth; not to defile our bodies consecrated unto God, and made temples of the Holy Spirit; excluding persons guilty of such things from any title or capacity of entering into God's kingdom: in fine, representing all such practices as most dishonourable to us, most displeasing to God, most grievous to God's holy Spirit, (the fountain of all virtue and goodness,) most contrary to the nature and design of our Religion, and most destructive of our souls.

Matt. v. 28.

1 Pet. ii. 11.

Col. iii. 5.

1 Thess. iv. 4.

Eph. v. 3.

Eph. iv. 29.

1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 18, 19.

Eph. v. 4, &c.

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VIII. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

That every man should quietly enjoy those supports and those conveniences of life, which in any honest manner (by God's bounty immediately dispensing it, or by God's blessing upon his industry) he hath acquired the possession of, or right unto, as all reason and equity do require, so it must be acknowledged absolutely necessary for the preservation of common peace, and the maintenance of civil society among men: to secure which purposes, and to encourage honest industry, this law prohibiteth all invasion or usurpation by any means whatever (either by open violence and extortion, or by clandestine fraud and surreption) of our neighbour's proper goods and rights: he that in any way, against his neighbour's knowledge or will, getteth into his power, or detaineth therein, what doth in equity belong to his neighbour, and which he can restore to him, doth trangress against the intent of this law; as we see it interpreted in Leviticus, where it is thus expressed; *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, nor rob him:* defrauding by cunning practice is no less forbidden, than robbing by violent force. Anywise ἀποστερεῖν, (that is, to deprive our neighbour of his due;) νοσφίζειν, to purloin, or (by subtle and sly conveyance) to separate any part of our neighbour's substance from him; πλεονεκτεῖν, to exact, or extort any thing more than one's due; ὑπερβαίνειν ἐν τῷ πράγματι, or *to go beyond,* overreach our neighbour *in dealing,* to delude and cozen him by false speeches or fallacious pretences, are acts, in St Paul's expression, to be referred hither, as so many

Lev. xix. 13.

1 Cor. vi. 8.

Tit. ii. 10.

1 Thess. iv. 6.

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special acts of theft. I cannot stand to reckon up all the sorts of unrighteousness included here, or reducible to this matter, (such as, beside down-
Prov. xxii. 28; xx. 14; xi. 1. right rapine and cheating, are, foul dealing in bargains and contracts; using false weights and
Ezek. xxii. 12; xviii. 7, 16. measures; withholding the pledge; detaining the
Hos. v. 10. labourer's wages from him; the exercising vexa-
Amos viii. 5. tious, biting, and devouring usuries; removing
Deut. xxv. 13. bounds of possession; oppressing by undue or ri-
Lev. xix. 13. gorous exaction; corrupting justice for reward or
Deut. xxiv. 14. favour; raising gain by unlawful and shameful arts
Ps. xv. 4. or practices; consenting or sharing with, advising
Isai. i. 23. James v. 4. or instigating to these, and the like acts; these I shall not particularly insist upon,) but shall only say, that God expresseth great indignation against, and threateneth most severely to punish, all acts
Deut. xxv. 16. of this kind; *For all,* saith he, *that do such things,* (such as use deceitful measures in trade,) *and all that do unrighteousness, are an abomination unto the*
1 Thess. iv. 6. *Lord thy God:* ἔκδικος ὁ Κύριος περὶ πάντων τούτων, *The Lord* (saith St Paul, speaking against the circumventing and defrauding our neighbour) *is an avenger for all these kinds of things:* nor indeed is the Gospel more severe in denunciation of punishment
1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. against any crime than this; *Know ye not, that unjust persons* (saith St Paul, meaning this sort of unjust persons, so most properly and strictly called) *shall not inherit the kingdom of God?* and κλέπται, πλεονέκται, ἅρπαγες, thieves, exactors, (or cheaters,) and rapacious persons, make a good party in the catalogue of those who shall be excluded from eternal bliss.

I should add the positive duties here to be understood, and referred to this matter, the which are commended to us in Scripture: such are, dili-

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gence and industry in our calling, whereby, with God's blessing, we may support ourselves, preventing the need, and escaping the temptation of encroachment upon our neighbour's property; (whereby we may, as St Paul speaketh, have need of nothing, may eat our own bread, may even have wherewith to impart to the needs of others;) contentment in that estate wherein God hath placed us, how mean soever; trusting in God, and relying upon his providence; casting our burden and care upon him, who hath promised to sustain us, who hath said, that He will never leave or forsake us: lastly, charitable relief of our neighbour in his need; for in such a case our neighbour hath a title to the goods we possess, derived from the appointment and donation of God, who is the absolute proprietor of all we have, we being only his stewards and dispensers thereof, according to the rules he hath declared; so that if we do not, according to his order, supply our poor neighbour, we are in just estimation, we shall in God's judgment appear to be, thieves, both in respect to God himself and to our neighbour; for that we thereby detain from God what by original right is his, and bereave our neighbour of what God hath bestowed on him.

Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thess. iv. 12. 2 Thess. iii. 12. Phil. iv. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 8. Prov. xxx. 8. Ps. lv. 23. 1 Pet. v. 7. Heb. xiii. 5.

IX. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.

It is in the Hebrew, *Thou shalt not answer* (to wit, being examined or adjured in judgment) *against thy neighbour as a false witness;* so that primarily, it seems, bearing false testimony against our neighbour (especially in matters of capital or

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of high concernment to him) is prohibited: yet that not only this great crime, but that all injurious (even extrajudicial) prejudicing our neighbour's reputation, and consequently his safety or his welfare in any sort, is forbidden, we may collect from that explication of this law, or that parallel law, which we have in Leviticus; *Thou shalt not,* it is there said, *go up and down as a talebearer among thy people*[p]; *neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour:* as a talebearer, רָכִיל; that is, a merchant, or trader in ill reports and stories concerning our neighbour, to his prejudice; defaming him, or detracting from him, or breeding in the minds of men an ill opinion of him; which vile and mischievous practice is otherwhere under several names condemned and reproved: such are muttering; *The words of a mutterer*[q], saith the Wise Man, *are as wounds, going into the innermost parts of the belly:* whispering, ψιθυρισμὸς, we have often in the Son of Sirach and in St Paul mentioned with a bad character, or with prohibition and reproof: supplanting; so in the good man's description, it is said, *He supplants not with his tongue*[r]; so the word signifies: detraction, or backbiting, καταλαλία, which is so often in the apostolical writings forbidden and reprehended: slander, or calumny, and sycophantry; that is, oppressing, abusing, or any way harming men by false tales, suggestions, or pretences: which sort of practices, how base they are in themselves, (nothing being more unworthy of an honest and ingenuous mind, nothing more ugly to the judgment of them who have any sense of goodness,) how contrary they are to justice, which doth not permit

Lev. xix. 16.

Prov. xviii. 8.

Sirach v. 14; xxi. 28; xxviii. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 20. James iv. 11. Rom. i. 30. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Luke iii. 14; xix. 8. Lev. xix. 11. Ps. lxii. 4; cxix. 134.

[p] οὐ πορεύσῃ δόλῳ, LXX. [q] Prov. xviii. 8, נרגן. [r] Psal. xv. 3, רגל.

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us to wrong our neighbour, as well in his credit and good name, as in his other goods, (for they perhaps may be as much valued by him, may really be of as much consequence to him, as anything that he hath;) which bindeth us to abstain from hurting him, as well in word as in deed; how opposite they are to charity, which obligeth us to think the best of our neighbour, and to endeavour that others also may do so; to conceal his real faults and blemishes; much more not to devise and affix false ones to him, not to gather and disperse ill reports to his prejudice; of how mischievous consequence also they are, breeding ill-will, and sowing strife in all societies both public and private, (even separating chief friends, as the Wise Man telleth us,) common sense and experience do shew: they consequently must be very odious in the sight of God, who loveth the peace and welfare of men; and very offensive to men, who do the mischiefs springing from them.

Prov. x. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7. Prov. xvi. 28.

To this law may be reduced our obligations to be candid in our opinions and discourses concerning others, (according to St Paul's excellent description of charity;) to forbear all rash and harsh censure, as you know our Saviour in his most Divine Sermon on the Mount chargeth us; to be veracious, sincere, and faithful in all our conversation; which duties are so often taught and pressed in both Testaments: *Ye shall not,* saith the Law, *steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie one to another;* and to walk uprightly, and work righteousness, and speak the truth from his heart, are the first lineaments in the good man's character drawn by the Psalmist; and, *These are the things ye shall do,*

1 Cor. xiii. Levit. xix. 11. Ps. xv. 2. Zech. viii. 16.

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saith God in the Prophet; *Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:* and in the New Testament, to lay aside lying, to speak the truth every man with his neighbour; to lay aside all malice, all guile, all hypocrisies, envyings, and backbitings, are apostolical commands.

Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 1.

X. COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's House; thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife; nor his Man-servant, nor his Maid-servant, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is thy Neighbour's.

This law is comprehensive and recapitulatory, as it were, of the rest concerning our neighbour, prescribing universal justice toward him; (whence St Mark, it seems, meaneth to render it in one word, by μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς, *Deprive not,* or bereave not your neighbour of anything;) and this not only in outward deed and dealing, but in inward thought and desire, the spring whence they do issue forth, (for, *From the heart,* as our Saviour teacheth, *do proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies;*) we are obliged to be so far from depriving our neighbour of any good thing belonging to him, that we are not so much as to wish or desire it; not only to abstain from injurious action, but to repress covetous inclinations: wherein is also implied, that we should have a delight and complacence in our neighbour's good; not envying him any enjoyment; being in our minds content with the portion God pleaseth to vouchsafe us;

Mark x. 19.

Matt. xv. 19.

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and entirely trusting in him, that he will supply us with what is needful or befitting to us, without the damage of our neighbour. Thus God's law is, as St Paul observed, spiritual; not only restraining exterior acts, but regulating our inmost thoughts, quelling all inordinate appetites and affections of heart within us; the which may be extended so as to respect not only matters of justice toward our neighbour, but all objects whatever of our practice; so as to import that which in the Christian law is so frequently enjoined us, as the life of our Religion, circumcising our hearts, crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires, mortifying our earthly members, putting to death by the Spirit the deeds of the body, putting off the old man, which is corrupted according to the deceitful lusts: Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις, *Thou shalt not unlawfully* or *irregularly desire,* doth, according to the spiritual intent, import all this.

Rom. vii. 14; ii. 29. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11. Gal. v. 24. Rom. vi. 6. Col. iii. 5. Eph. iv. 22. Rom. vii. 7.

I have done; and shall only add, that the sum and end of these, and all other good laws, of all Religion, and all our duty, is (as we often are taught in the New Testament) comprised in those two rules, of loving God with all our heart, and loving our neighbour as ourselves; seriously and honestly attending unto which, we can hardly fail of knowing what in any case our duty is: it remains that we employ our best care and endeavour on the conscientious practice thereof; imploring therewith the assistance of God's grace, and that good Spirit, which God hath most graciously promised to those who duly ask it, by which alone we can be enabled to keep God's commandments: to him be all glory and praise. Amen.

Matt. xxii. 37, 39. 1 Tim. i. 5.

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THE DOCTRINE

OF

THE SACRAMENTS.

It is a peculiar excellency of our Religion, that it doth not much employ men's care, pains, and time about matters of ceremonial observance; but doth chiefly (and in a manner wholly) exercise them in works of substantial duty, agreeable to reason, perfective of man's nature, productive of true glory to God, and solid benefit to men. Its design is not to amuse our fancies with empty shews, nor to take up our endeavours in fruitless performances; but to render us truly good, and like unto God; first in interior disposition of mind, then in exterior practice; full of hearty love and reverence to God, of tender charity and good-will toward men; of moderation and purity in the enjoyment of these things; of all true piety and virtue; whereby we may become qualified for that life of bliss which it tendereth and promiseth; for conversation in that holy society above, to which it designeth and calleth us. Yet because fancy[a] is naturally a medium, and an effectual instrument of action; and because sensible objects are apt strongly to affect our minds; it hath pleased the Divine Wisdom to apply them, in fit measure, and to sanctify them to those good purposes, by appointing some few solemn and significant rites to be observed by us, being in their own nature

[a] It hath especially upon vulgar and weaker minds, a strong efficacy.

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proper and useful, and by God designed to declare his mind and gracious intents to us; to consign and convey his grace into our souls, to confirm our faith in him, to raise our devotion toward him, to quicken our resolutions of obeying his will; to enable and excite us to the practice of those great duties which he requireth of us: *Our Lord Jesus Christ,* saith St Austin[b], *hath subjected us to his gentle yoke and light burden; whence, with sacraments most few in number, most easy for observance, most excellent in signification, he bound together the society of new people:* and, *The mercy of God,* saith he again[c], *would have religion free, by the celebration of a most few and most clear sacraments.*

Of these there appear two (and St Austin in the place cited could instance in no more) of general and principal use, instituted by our Lord himself; which, because they represent to us somewhat not subject to sense, and have a secret influence upon us; because what is intended by them is not immediately discernible by what is done, without some explication, (their significancy being not wholly grounded in nature, but depending upon arbitrary institution, as that of words, which is of kin to them; whence St Austin calls a sacrament, *Verbum visibile*[d],) have usually been called

[b] Dominus noster leni jugo suo nos subdidit, et sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, observatione facillimis, significatione præstantissimis, societatem novi populi colligavit; sicut est Baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, Communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius; et si quid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur, &c.—[Ep. LIV. ad. Jan. Opp. Tom. II. col. 124 A.]

[c] Religionem paucissimis et manifestissimis celebrationum sacramentis misericordia Dei esse liberam voluit.—[Ep. LV. col. 142 E.]

[d] [In Joh. Tract. LXXXII. Opp. Tom. III. p. ii. col. 703 C.]

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mysteries, (that is, actions of a close and occult importance, of deeper meaning and design than is obvious to ordinary perception;) and thence are also called sacraments, for no other reason, I conceive, than because the ancientest translators of the Bible into Latin did usually render the word μυστήριον by the word *sacramentum;* whence everything containing under it somewhat of abstruse meaning is by ancient writers termed a sacrament. So Tertullian calls all Christianity the sacrament of Christian religion; and Elisha's axe he calls the sacrament of wood[e]; and St Austin speaks of the sacrament of bread, of fish, of numbers, of the rock, &c. In short, he says of all signs, that when they belong to Divine things, they are called sacraments[f]; which shews to how small purpose the disputes are, yea, on what small grounds the decrees are, concerning the number, general nature, and efficacy of sacraments: for where a name or form of a sacrament is of so large, ambiguous, and indeterminate signification, there can be nothing but confusion in the disputes about it. But those which chiefly at least, and in way of eminency, have obtained this name, are those two instituted by our Lord, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; of which I shall in order discourse; and so of each, as very briefly to consider the occasion of their institution; the actions enjoined in them; the nature of them, or wherein their mystery doth

[e] Sacramenti natura diserte et plane exprimitur.—[Adv. Jud. cap. 13. Opp. p. 190 D.]

[f] Nimis autem longum est convenienter disputare de varietate signorum, quæ, cum ad res divinas pertinent, Sacramenta appellantur.—[Ep. CXXXVIII. ad Marcel. Opp. Tom. II. col. 412 E.]

In cunctis Christi actionibus sacramentorum mysteria coruscarunt.—Leo I. Ep. IV.

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consist; the ends for which they were intended; and the effects they produce; together with the dispositions and duties (antecedent, concomitant, and consequent) required of us in the use and practice of them. And first,

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OF BAPTISM.

THERE were, as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, in sacred use among the Jews διάφοροι βαπτισμοί, *several kinds of baptisms*[a]. The learned in their laws and customs teach, that they never did receive any person into their covenant, whether that which was more strict, (to which natural Jews and proselytes of righteousness were tied,) or that which was more lax, with which strangers and proselytes of the gate did comply, without a baptism[b]. And that priests and Levites entering into their office were to be sanctified by washing with water, we see plainly prescribed in their Law; likewise that all persons who had contracted any kind of defilement were purified by the like ceremony, particularly children new born, is expressed there. Moreover, that it was in use for persons, who were conscious to themselves of having transgressed God's law, being in God's name invited by some person of eminent authority (a prophet, or like a prophet, one commissionated by God) unto repentance and amendment of life,

Heb. ix. 10.

Exod. xxix. 4. Numb. viii. 6.

Levit. xv. 8, 16, 18, 27; xxii. 6. Numb. xix. 7, &c.

Ezek. xvi. 4.

[a] Βαπτισμῶν διδαχή.—Heb. vi. 2.

[b] Seld. de Synedriis. [Lib. 1. cap. 3. Opp. Vol. 1. p. 779, et seq.]

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to be washed by him, in testimony of their steadfast purpose to amend, and in hope to obtain pardon from God of their past offences, and to be reinstated in his favour, appears probable by St John the Baptist's undertaking, and the success thereof. For if the manner of his proceeding had been altogether unusual and unknown, so many, it seems, would not so readily (without any stir or obstacle) have complied therewith; especially among the Scribes and Pharisees, those zealous adherents to traditionary practice, who, to maintain their credit and interest with the people, were so averse from all appearance of novelty. This practice then, of washing in so many cases, and to so many purposes, customary among God's people, to signify men's entering into a new state or course of life, being withal most apt and proper for his design, our blessed Saviour, who never favoured needless innovations, was pleased to assume and impose upon the disciples and followers of his Religion, accommodating it to those holy purposes, which we shall now endeavour to declare.

John i. 25, 33.

What the action itself enjoined is, what the manner and form thereof, is apparent by the words of our Lord's institution; *Going forth therefore*, saith he, *teach* (or *disciple*) *all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you.* The action is baptizing, or immersing in water; the object thereof, those persons of any nation whom his ministers can by their instruction and persuasion render disciples; that is, such as do sincerely believe the truth of his doctrine, and seriously resolve to obey his commandments. It

Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15.

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is performed in the name; that is, it is ministered by the authority, and bears special relation unto the Persons of the blessed Trinity, as the chief objects of the faith professed, and the sole objects of the obedience undertaken therein; as exhibiting gracious favours unto the person baptized, and as receiving special obligations from him.

Such is the action itself declared to be; the mystery thereof consists in its being a notable sign to represent, and an authentic seal to ratify, the collation then made of certain great benefits to us; and our undertaking correspondent duties toward God.

The benefits which God then signifies, and (upon due terms) engageth to confer on us, are these:

I. The purgation or absolution of us from the guilt of past offences, by a free and full remission of them, (the which washing by water, cleansing from all stains, doth most appositely represent;) and consequently God's being reconciled unto us, his receiving us into a state of grace and favour, his freely justifying us, (that is, looking upon us, or treating us as just and innocent persons, although before we stood guilty of heinous sins, and thereupon liable to grievous punishments,) that these benefits are conferred in Baptism, many places of Scripture plainly shew; and the primitive Church[c], with most firm and unanimous consent,

[c] Vid. Just. Mart. [Ἐπειδὴ τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν ἡμῶν ἀγνοοῦντες, κατ' ἀνάγκην γεγενήμεθα ἐξ ὑγρᾶς σπορᾶς κατὰ μίξιν τὴν τῶν γονέων πρὸς ἀλλήλους, καὶ ἐν ἔθεσι φαύλοις καὶ πονηραῖς ἀνατροφαῖς γεγόναμεν, ὅπως μὴ ἀνάγκης τέκνα μηδὲ ἀγνοίας μένωμεν, ἀλλὰ προαιρέσεως καὶ ἐπιστήμης, ἀφέσεώς τε ἁμαρτιῶν ὑπὲρ ὧν προημάρτομεν τύχωμεν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι. —Apol. I. § 61. Opp. p. 80 B.]

Tertull. de Bapt. [Cap. 1. Felix sacramentum aquæ nostræ, qua abluti delictis pristinæ cæcitatis, in vitam æternam liberamur. —Opp. p. 224 A.]

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Acts xxii. 16; did believe: *and now,* said Ananias to St Paul, *why dost thou tarry? arise and be baptized, and* ii. 38. *wash away thy sins:* and, *Repent,* saith St Peter, preaching to the Jews, *and let every one of you be baptized for the remission of sins:* and, *Christ,* saith Eph. v. 25, 26. St Paul again to the Ephesians, *loved his church, and delivered himself for it, that he might sanctify it, purging it by the washing of water,* ἐν ῥήματι, (that is, he effectually in Baptism consigned to the members of his Church that mercy and remission of sins which he purchased and merited by his 1 Cor. vi. 11. passion:) and again, *Such,* saith he to the Corinthians, *were some of you;* (that is, ye were persons guilty of heinous sins;) *but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of our Lord, and by the Spirit of our God:* where having been washed in Christ's name doth (in congruity with what is said in other places) denote Baptism in his name; being sanctified and justified do express the first benefits accompanying that Baptism. And indeed, wherever a general remission of sins, or a full sanctification, or consecration, and justification of men's persons in God's sight, are mentioned; that remission of sins, that separation, or dedication unto God's service; that reception into grace, which are consigned in Baptism, are, I conceive, understood; there being no other season or occasion, wherein ordinarily and visibly God doth exhibit those benefits.

It may be demanded: How children, by reason of their innocent age, are capable of these benefits[d]; how they can be pardoned, who never had offended; how they can be justified, who never

[d] Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum? —Tertull.

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were capable of being unjust? I briefly answer: that because they come from that race, which by sin had forfeited God's favour, and had alienated itself from him; because also they have in them those seeds of pravity, from which afterward certainly, life continuing, (without God's restraining grace,) will sprout forth innumerable evil actions; therefore that God overlooking all the defects of their nature, both relative and absolute, or personal, doth assume them into his special favour, is no small benefit to them, answerable to the remission of actual sin, and restitution from the state consequent thereon in others[e].

II. In Baptism, the gift of God's holy Spirit is conferred, qualifying us for the state into which we then come, and enabling us to perform the duties we then undertake, which otherwise we should be unable to perform; for purification of our hearts from vicious inclinations and desires; for begetting holy dispositions and affections in our souls; for to guide and instruct us, to sustain and strengthen us, to encourage and comfort us in all the course of Christian piety: the which effects are well also figured by water, which purifieth things both from inherent and adherent filth. That this benefit is annexed to Baptism, the Scripture also teacheth us; *Be baptized,* saith St Peter, Acts ii. 38. *in the name of Christ, to the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost:* εἰς ἓν πνεῦμα ἐποτίσθημεν, *We being baptized in one body,* 1 Cor. xii. *are made to drink of one Spirit,* saith St Paul: 13. and with the *Laver of regeneration* St Paul again Tit. iii. 5.

[e] —impletur apud nos Spiritu Sancto puerorum innocens ætas, &c. Cypr. Epist. x. [?]

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joineth *the renovation of the Holy Ghost*[t]: and it is represented as an advantage of our Saviour's Baptism above that of John, that our Lord not only baptized with water to repentance, but with the Holy Ghost, and fire.

Matt. iii. 11.

Some preventing operations of the Holy Ghost (whereby God freely draweth men to Christianity, persuading their minds to assent thereto, inspiring their hearts with resolutions to comply with it) do precede Baptism; but a more full communication thereof, (due by compact, assured by promise,) for the confirming and maintaining us in the firm belief and constant practice of Christianity, is consequent thereon; *After ye had believed, ye were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise*, saith St Paul. To signify which benefit then conferred, the ancient Christians did to Baptism annex the chrism, or holy unction, signifying the collation of that healing and cheering Spirit to the baptized person; that which St Paul may seem to respect, when he saith, *He that establisheth* (or *confirmeth*) *us with you into Christ, and who hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us, and hath given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

Eph. i. 13.

2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

III. With those gifts is connected the benefit of regeneration, implying our entrance into a new state and course of life; being endowed with new faculties, dispositions, and capacities of souls; becoming new creatures and new men, as it were renewed after the likeness of God in righteousness and true holiness; our being sanctified in our hearts and lives, being mortified to fleshy lusts

Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24. Col. iii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17.

[t] — διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας, καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου. —Tit. iii. 5.

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and worldly affections, being quickened to a spiritual life and heavenly conversation: in short, becoming, in relation and in disposition of mind, the children of God. This the matter and the action of Baptism do set out: for as children new born, (for cleansing them from impurities adherent from the womb,) both among the Jews and other people, were wont to be washed[g]; so are we in Baptism, signifying our purification from natural and worldly defilements: the mersion also in water, and the emersion thence, doth figure our death to the former, and receiving to a new life. Whence Baptism is by St Paul called *The laver of regeneration;* and our Lord saith, that *If a man be not born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;* that is, every one becoming a Christian is by Baptism regenerated, or put into a new state of life, getteth new dispositions of soul, and new relations of God; *Ye are all,* saith St Paul, *the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;* that is, by embracing his doctrine, and submitting to his law professedly in Baptism: and, *We,* saith St Paul again, *are buried with Christ through baptism unto death; that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in newness of life.*

Ezek. xvi. 4.
Tit. iii. 5.
John iii. 5.
Gal. iii. 26.
Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii. 12.

IV. With these benefits is conjoined that of being inserted into God's Church, his family, the number of his chosen people, the mystical body of Christ, whereby we become entitled to the privileges and immunities of that heavenly corporation: *We,*

1 Cor. xii. 13.

[g] —λούσασα καὶ ἐμπλήσασα γάλακτος.—Theocr. [Idyll. xxiv. 3.]

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saith St Paul, *have been all baptized in one Spirit*
Gal. iii. 27. *into one body,* the mystical body of Christ: and, *So many of you,* saith he again, *as have been baptized into Christ,* (into Christ mystical, or the Church,) *have put on Christ; and ye are,* adds he, *all one in Christ Jesus.* As proselytes among the Jews by Baptism were admitted unto the communion and privileges of the Jewish, so thereby are we received into the like communion and privileges of the Christian, far more excellent, society.

V. In consequence of these things, there is with Baptism conferred a capacity of, a title unto, an assurance (under condition of persevering in faith and obedience to our Lord) of, eternal life and
1 Pet. i. 3, 4. salvation: *We are* therein, in St Peter's words, *regenerated unto a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, by* that *resurrection of Christ,* which is represented to us in this action; and so therein applied, as to beget in us a title and a hope to rise again in like manner to a blissful life; whence
Col. ii. 12. we are said therein to rise with him; *Being,* saith St Paul, *buried with him in baptism, wherein also we were raised again:* whence by the two
1 Pet. iii. 21. great Apostles Baptism is said to save us: *Baptism,* saith St Peter, the antitype of the delivery in the flood, *doth save us;* that is, admitteth us into the ark, putteth us into the sure way of salva-
Tit. iii. 5. tion: and, *God,* saith St Paul, *according to his mercy saved us, by the laver of regeneration:* and,
Mark xvi. 16. *He that shall believe, and shall be baptized, shall be saved,* is our Saviour's own word and promise: *shall be saved;* that is, shall be put into a state and way of salvation; continuing in which state, proceeding in which way, he assuredly shall be saved:

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for faith there denoteth perseverance in faith, and Baptism implieth performance of the conditions therein undertaken; which next is to be considered.

For as this holy rite signifieth and sealeth God's collation of so many great benefits on us; so it also implieth, and, on our part, ratifieth our obligation, then in an especial manner commencing, to several most important duties toward him. It implieth, that we are in mind fully persuaded concerning the truth of that doctrine which God the Father revealed by his blessed Son, and confirmed by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost; we therein profess our humble and thankful embracing the overtures of mercy and grace, purchased for us by our Saviour's meritorious undertaking and performances, the which are then exhibited and tendered to us; we therein declare our hearty resolution to forsake all wicked courses of life, repugnant to the doctrine and law of Christ; fully to conform our lives to his will, living thereafter in all piety, righteousness, and sobriety, as loyal subjects, faithful servants, and dutiful children to God: in brief, we therein are bound, renouncing all erroneous principles, all vicious inclinations, and all other engagements whatever, entirely to devote ourselves to the faith and obedience of God the Father, our glorious and good Maker; of God the Son, our gracious Redeemer; of God the Holy Ghost, our blessed Guide, Assistant, Advocate, and Comforter: these are the duties antecedent unto, and concomitant of, our Baptism, (immediately and formally required of those who are capable of performing them,

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mediately and virtually of them who are not,) the which are signified by our being baptized in the name of the holy Trinity.

These duties the Scripture commonly expresseth by the words, faith and repentance; sometimes singly, sometimes conjunctly: *If,* said Philip to the Eunuch, *thou believest with thy heart, it is lawful* (for thee to be baptized;) faith was an indispensable condition prerequisite thereto: and, *Repent,* saith St Peter, *and let every one of you be baptized;* repentance also was necessary to precede it: indeed, both these (as they are meant in this case) do in effect signify the same; each importeth a being renewed in mind, in judgment, in will, in affection; a serious embracing of Christ's doctrine, and a steadfast resolution to adhere thereto in practice. Hence are those effects or consequences attributed to faith, justifying us, reconciling and bringing us near to God, saving us; because it is the necessary condition required by God, and by him accepted, that we may be capable of those benefits conferred in Baptism; the same being also referred to that repentance, or change of mind, which must accompany our entrance into Christianity; that good conscience with which we stipulate a perpetual devotion and obedience to God; the which therefore doth, as St Peter telleth us, save us; it contributing to our salvation, as a duty necessarily required in order thereto. This is that death to sin, and resurrection to righteousness, that being buried with Christ, and rising again with him, so as to walk in newness of life, which the baptismal action signifies, and which we then really undertake to perform.

Acts viii. 37;

ii. 38;

xxvi. 14; v. 31; xx. 21; xxvi. 20; iii. 38; xvii. 30. Rom. v. 1, 2; iii. 25; ii. 4. Gal. ii. 16; iii. 8. Heb. x. 39. Eph. ii. 8; iii. 12. 2 Thess. ii. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 25. 2 Pet. iii. 9. Matt. ix. 13. Luke xxiv. 47. Mark ii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. vi. 3, 4, &c.

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And as such are the duties preceding or accompanying Baptism; so making good the engagements they contain, constantly persisting in them, maintaining and improving them, are duties necessarily consequent thereupon: *Having*, saith the Apostle, *had our bodies washed with pure water, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.* We should, indeed, continually remember, frequently and seriously consider, what in so solemn a manner we (upon so valuable considerations) did then undertake, promise, and vow to God, diligently striving to perform it; for violating our part of the covenant and stipulation then made, by apostasy in profession or practice from God and goodness, we certainly must forfeit those inestimable benefits which God otherwise hath tied himself to bestow; the pardon of our sins, the favour of God, the being members of Christ, the grace, guidance, assistance, and comfort of the Holy Spirit; the right unto, and hope of salvation. We so doing, shall not only simply disobey and offend God; but add the high breach of fidelity to our disobedience, together the most heinous ingratitude, abusing the gr grace that could be vouchsafed us; *If we sin after we have taken the acknowledgmen truth*, (saith the Apostle, meaning tha profession of our faith in Baptism,) *w under foot the Son of God, we profane the covenant, we do despite unto th grace;* and incurring so deep gu expect suitable punishment. But I other Sacrament,

Heb. x. 22, 23. 2 Pet. iii. 17.

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THE

EUCHARIST[a].

Among the wonderful works of power and grace performed by God Almighty in favour of the children of Israel, and in order to their delivery from the Egyptian slavery, a most signal one was the smiting the firstborn in every house of the Egyptians, and passing over the houses of the children of Israel; wherein God declared his just wrath against their cruel oppressors, depriving them, in a sudden and dreadful manner, of what was nearest and dearest to them; and his gracious mercy toward them, in preserving what was alike dear to them from so woful a calamity; thus (as the text expresseth it) putting a difference between the Egyptians and the children of Israel. Now that the memory of so remarkable a mercy might be preserved, that their affections might be raised to a strong sense of God's goodness, and their faith in him confirmed, so as in the like need to hope for the same favourable help and protection, by the consideration of so notable an experiment, it pleased God to appoint a Sacrament, or mysterious rite, to be annually celebrated, representing and recalling to mind that act of God, wherein his special kindness was so eminently demonstrated toward his people: the same also (as did other rites and sacrifices instituted by God among that

[a] Vid. Cypr. Ep. LXIII.

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people) looking directly forward upon that other great delivery from sin and hell, which God in mercy designed toward mankind, to be achieved by our Saviour; prefiguring, that the souls of them who should be willing to forsake the spiritual bondage of sin, should be saved from the ruin coming upon them who would abide therein; God regarding the blood of our Saviour (that immaculate Lamb, sacrificed for them) sprinkled upon the doors of their houses; that is, by hearty faith and repentance applied to their consciences. The occasion of celebrating which holy rite, our Saviour we see did improve to the institution of this Sacrament, most agreeing therewith in design, as representative and commemorative of the greatest blessing and mercy that we are capable of having vouchsafed to us; some part of that ancient rite or sacrifice (which was most suitable to the special purposes of this institution, and most conformable to the general constitution of the Christian Religion, whereby all bloody sacrifices are abolished) being retained in this.

Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. i. 2.

The action itself (or rather the whole rite, consisting of divers actions) we see plainly described in the Gospels, and in the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians, distinguishable into these chief parts.

1 The benediction and consecration (by prayer and thanksgiving[b]) of bread and wine.

1 Tim. iv. 5.

2 The breaking of bread[c], and handling the cup.

[b] Εὐχαριστήσας—Mark xiv. 23; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24.

[c] Ἔκλασε—Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24.

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3 The delivery and distribution[d] of them to the persons present.

4 The declaration accompanying that delivery, that those symbolical things and actions did represent our Saviour's body given and broken, our Saviour's blood shed and poured out for us, in sanction of the new covenant.

5 The actual partaking of those symbols, by eating the bread and drinking the wine, done by all present[e].

These things we find done at the first institution and exemplary practice of this holy ceremony; the which our Saviour obliged us to imitate, saying, *Do this in remembrance of me.* There followeth in St Matthew and St Mark, presently after the narration concerning these particulars, Καὶ ὑμνήσαντες, *And having sung a hymn, they went to the mount of Olives:* which action was, indeed, in itself proper to conclude the practice of this holy rite; yet what reference it hath thereto cannot thence be determined: however, with these the Church hath always joined several acts of devotion (confessions, prayers, praises, thanksgivings, intercessions, vows) suitable to the nature and design of the sacrament, apt to glorify God, and edify the faithful in the celebration thereof.

Matt. xxvi. 30. Mark xiv. 26.

Such is the practice itself instituted and enjoined by our Saviour; the mysterious importance thereof, as we find it explained in Holy Scripture, (the only solid and sure ground upon which we can build the explication of supernatural mysteries,) consisteth chiefly in these particulars:

[d] Διαμερίσατε—Luke xxii. 17.
[e] Ἔπιον πάντες—Mark xiv. 23.

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I. It was intended for a commemorative representation of our Saviour's passion for us; fit to mind us of it, to move us to consider it, to beget affections in us suitable to the memory and consideration thereof: Τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν· *Do this,* saith our Lord, *for my remembrance,* or *in commemoration of me;* that is, so as thereby to have raised in you a reflection of mind and heart upon those grievous pains which I shall have endured for your sake, to procure for you a remission of sins and reconciliation to God: and, *So often,* saith St Paul, *as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,* καταγγέλλετε, *ye tell forth* (or significantly express) *the death of our Lord till he come,* or during his absence from us. The suffering of our Saviour (the most wonderful act of goodness and charity that ever was performed in the world, which produced effects of highest consequence to our benefit, the consideration whereof is apt to work the best dispositions of piety in us) should very frequently be present to our thoughts and affections; and that it may be so with advantage, such a solemn and sensible representation thereof is very conducible; wherein we behold him crucified, as it were *in effigie,* his body broken, his blood poured out for us; it being, in a sort, a putting us into the circumstances of those who did behold our Saviour for us hanging upon the cross. Our Lord being absent in body from us, (sitting in heaven at God's right hand,) to supply that absence, that we should not be apt to forget him, and thereby become wholly estranged from him, is pleased to order this occasion of being present, and conversing with us, in such a manner, as may

Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 25; xi. 26.

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retain in our memories his gracious performances for us; may impress in our hearts a kindly sense of them; may raise us up in mind and affection to him.

II. The benefits consequent upon our Saviour's passion, rightly apprehended, heartily believed, seriously considered by us, are hereby lively represented, and effectually conveyed, to the sustenance and nourishment of our spiritual life, to the refreshment and comfort of our souls. It is a holy feast, a spiritual repast, a divine entertainment, to which God in kindness invites us; to which, if we come with well-disposed minds, he there feeds us with most holy and delicious viands, with heavenly manna, with most reviving and cherishing liquor. Bread is the staff of life, the most common, most necessary, and most wholesome, and most savoury meat; wine is the most pleasant and wholesome also, the most sprightly and cordial drink: by them therefore our Lord chose to represent that body and blood, by the oblation of which a capacity of life and health was procured to mankind; the taking in which by right apprehension, tasting it by hearty faith, digesting it by careful attention and meditation, converting it into our substance by devout, grateful, and holy affections, joined with serious and steady resolutions of living answerable thereto, will certainly support and maintain our spiritual life in a vigorous health and happy growth of grace; refreshing our hearts with comfort and satisfaction unspeakable; he that doeth thus, eats our Saviour's flesh, and drinks his blood, (that is, who, as our Saviour interpreteth it, doth believe in him; that belief importing all other

John vi. 51, 47; v. 39.

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acts of mind and will connected with right persuasions concerning him,) hath eternal life, and shall live for ever, as himself declares and promises: which benefits, therefore, in the due performance of this holy duty, are conveyed unto us.

III. This Sacrament declares that union which good Christians partaking thereof have with Christ; their mystical insertion into him, by a close dependence upon him for spiritual life, mercy, grace, and salvation; a constant adherence to him, by faith and obedience; a near conformity to him in mind and affection; an inseparable conjunction with him, by the strictest bands of fidelity, and by the most endearing relations: which things could not more fitly be set out, than by the partaking our best and most necessary food; which being taken in, soon becomes united to us, assimilated and converted into our substance; thereby renewing our strength, and repairing the decays of our nature: wherefore, *He,* saith our Saviour, *that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him;* and, *The cup of blessing,* saith St Paul, *which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* We in the outward action partake of the symbols representing our Saviour's body and blood; we in the spiritual intention communicate of his very person, being (according to the manner insinuated) intimately united to him.

John xv. 4; vi. 56. 1 Cor. x. 16.

IV. By this Sacrament consequently is signified and sealed that union which is among our Saviour's true disciples communicating therein; their being together united in consent of mind and unity

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of faith; in mutual good-will and affection, in hope, and tendency to the same blessed end, in spiritual brotherhood and society; especially upon account of their communion with Christ, which most closely ties them one to another; they partaking of this one individual food, become translated, as it were, into one body and substance[f]; *Seeing*, saith St Paul, *we being many, are one bread, one body; for all of us do partake of that one bread.*

1 Cor. x. 17;

In the representing, producing, and promoting these things, we are taught the mystery of this Sacrament doth consist; it was designed, as a proper and efficacious instrument, to raise in us pious affections toward our good God and gracious Redeemer; to dispose us to all holy practice; to confirm our faith, to nourish our hope, to quicken our resolutions of walking carefully in the ways of duty; to unite us more fastly to our Saviour, and to combine us in charity one toward another; the accomplishing of which intents thereof doth suppose our faithful and diligent concurrence in the use thereof: whence arise many duties incumbent upon us in respect thereto; some antecedent, some concomitant, some consequent to the use thereof.

1 Before we address ourselves to the partaking of this venerable mystery, we should consider whither we are going, what is the nature and importance of the action we set ourselves about; that we are approaching to our Lord's table, (so St Paul calleth it,) to come into his more especial presence, to be entertained by him with the dearest welcome and the best cheer that can be; to receive the fullest testimonies of his mercy, and the surest

x. 21.

[f] Vid. Cyp. Ep. LXIII. p. 108; LXVII. p. 115.

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pledges of his favour toward us; that we are going to behold our Lord in tenderest love, offering up himself a sacrifice to God, therein undergoing the sorest pains and foulest disgraces for our good and salvation; that we ought therefore to bring with us dispositions of soul suitable to such an access unto, such an intercourse with, our gracious Lord. Had we the honour and favour to be invited to the table of a great prince, what especial care should we have to dress our bodies in a clean and decent garb, to compose our minds in order to expression of all due respect to him; to bring nothing about us noisome or ugly, that might offend his sight, or displease his mind: the like, surely, and greater care we should apply, when we thus being called, do go into God's presence and communion. We should, in preparation thereto, with all our power, endeavour to cleanse our souls from all impurity of thought and desire; from all iniquity and perverseness; from all malice, envy, hatred, anger, and all such evil dispositions, which are most offensive to God's all-piercing sight, and unbeseeming his glorious presence; we should dress our souls with all those comely ornaments of grace (with purity, humility, meekness, and charity) which will render us acceptable and well-pleasing to him; we should compose our minds into a frame of reverence and awful regard to the majesty of God; into a lowly, calm, and tender disposition of heart, apt to express all respect due to his presence, fit to admit the gracious illapses of his holy Spirit; very susceptive of all holy and heavenly affections, which are suitable to such a communion, or may spring from it. We should therefore

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remove and abandon from us, not only all vicious inclinations and evil purposes; but even all worldly cares, desires, and passions, which may distract or discompose us, that may dull or deject us, that may cause us to behave ourselves indecently or unworthily before God, that may bereave us of the excellent fruits from so blessed an entertainment.

To these purposes we should, according to St
1 Cor. xi. 28; Paul's advice, δοκιμάζειν ἑαυτούς, examine and approve ourselves; considering our past actions and our present inclinations; and accordingly, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer to God for his gracious assistance therein, working our souls into a hearty remorse for our past miscarriages, and a sincere resolution to amend for the future; forsaking all sin, endeavouring in all our actions to
v. 7; serve and please God; *Purging out*, as St Paul again enjoineth us, *the old leaven of vice and wickedness;* so that we may feast, and celebrate this passover, in which Christ is mystically sacrificed for us, in the unleavened dispositions of sincerity and truth. Such are the duties previous to our partaking this sacrament.

2 Those duties which accompany it are, a reverent and devout affection of heart, with a suitable behaviour therein; an awful sense of mind, befitting the majesty of that presence wherein we do appear, answerable to the greatness, and goodness, and holiness of him with whom we converse, becoming the sacredness of those mysteries which
xi. 29. are exhibited to us, (that which St Paul seemeth to call διακρίνειν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Κυρίου, *to discern* or *distinguish our Lord's body;* that is, yielding a peculiar reverence of mind and behaviour in regard

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thereto;) a devotion of heart, consisting in hearty contrition for our sins, which did expose our Saviour to the enduring such pains, then remembered; in firm resolution to forsake the like thereafter, as injurious, dishonourable, and displeasing to him; in fervent love of him, as full of so wonderful goodness and charity toward us; in most hearty thankfulness for those unconceivably great expressions of kindness toward us; in deepest humility, upon sense of our unworthiness to receive such testimonies of grace and favour from him; (our unworthiness to eat the crumbs that fall from his table; how much more to be admitted into such degrees of honourable communion and familiarity, of close conjunction and union with him!) in pious joy in consideration of the excellent privileges herein imparted, and of the blessed fruits accruing to us from his gracious performances; in a comfortable hope of obtaining and enjoying the benefits of his obedience and passion, by the assistance of his grace; in steady faith and full persuasion of mind, that he is (supposing our dutiful compliance) ready to bestow upon us all the blessings then exhibited; in attentively fixing the eyes of our mind, and all the powers of our soul (our understanding, will, memory, fancy, affection) upon him, as willingly pouring forth his life for our salvation; lastly, in motions of enlarged good-will and charity toward all our brethren for his sake, in obedience to his will, and in imitation of him: such like duties should attend our participation of this holy Sacrament.

Mark vii. 28.

3 The effects of having duly performed which, should appear in the practice of those duties which

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are consequent thereon; being such as these: an increase of all pious inclinations and affections, expressing themselves in a real amendment of our lives, and producing more goodly fruits of obedience; the thorough digestion of that spiritual nourishment, by our becoming more fastly knit to our Saviour by higher degrees of faith and love; the maintaining a more lively sense of his superabundant goodness; the cherishing those influences of grace which descend upon our hearts in this communion, and improving them to nearer degrees of perfection in all piety and virtue; a watchful care and endeavour in our lives to approve ourselves in some measure worthy of that great honour and favour which God hath vouchsafed us in admitting us to so near approaches to himself; an earnest pursuance of the resolutions, performance of the vows, making good the engagements, which in so solemn a manner, upon so great an occasion, we made, and offered up unto our God and Saviour; finally, the considering that by the breach of such resolutions, by the violation of such engagements, our sins receiving so mighty aggravation of vain inconstancy and wicked perfidiousness, our guilt will hugely be increased; our souls relapsing into so grievous distemper, our spiritual strength will be exceedingly impaired; consequently hence our true comforts will be abated, our best hopes will be shaken, our eternal state will be desperately endangered.

There is one duty which I should not forbear to touch concerning this Sacrament; that is, our gladly embracing any opportunity presented of communicating therein; the doing so being not

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only our duty, but a great aid and instrument of piety; the neglecting it a grievous sin, and productive of great mischiefs to us.

The primitive Christians did very frequently use it, partaking therein, as it seems, at every time of their meeting for God's service; it is said of them by St Luke, that *They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and communion, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers;* and, *When you meet together, it is not* (as according to the intent and duty of meeting it should be) *to eat the Lord's Supper,* saith St Paul: and Justin Martyr in his second Apology[g], describing the religious service of God in their assemblies, mentioneth it as a constant part thereof; and Epiphanius reporteth it a custom in the Church, derived from apostolical institution, to celebrate the eucharist thrice every week, that is, so often as they did meet to pray and praise God; which practice may well be conceived a great means of kindling and preserving in them that holy fervour of piety, which they so illustriously expressed in their conversation, and in their gladsome suffering for Christ's sake: and the remitting of that frequency, as it is certainly a sign and an effect, so in part it may possibly be reckoned a cause, of the degeneracy of Christian practice, into that great coldness and slackness which afterward did seize upon it, and now doth apparently keep it in a languishing and half-dying state.

Acts ii. 42.

1 Cor. xi. 20.

The rarer occasions therefore we now have of performing this duty, (the which, indeed, was always esteemed the principal office of God's service,) of

[g] [The first in the Benedictine edition. Cf. § 67, p. 83 D.]

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enjoying this benefit, (the being deprived whereof was also deemed the greatest punishment and infelicity that could arrive to a Christian,) the more ready we should be to embrace them. If we dread God's displeasure, if we value our Lord and his benefits, if we tender the life, health, and welfare of our souls, we shall not neglect it; for how can we but extremely offend God by so extreme rudeness, that when he kindly invites us to his table, we are averse from coming thither, or utterly refuse it? that when he calleth us into his presence, we run from him? that when he, with his own hand, offereth us inestimable mercies and blessings, we reject them? It is not only the breach of God's command, who enjoined us to do this, but a direct contempt of his favour and goodness, most clearly and largely exhibited in this office. And how can we bear any regard to our Lord, or be anywise sensible of his gracious performances in our behalf, if we are unwilling to join in thankful and joyful commemoration of them? How little do we love our own souls, if we suffer them to pine and starve for want of that food which God here dispenseth for their sustenance and comfort? if we bereave them of enjoying so high a privilege, so inestimable a benefit, so incomparable pleasures as are to be found and felt in this service, or do spring and flow from it? What reasonable excuse can we frame for such neglect? Are we otherwise employed? what business can there be more important, than serving God, and saving our own souls? is it wisdom, in pursuance of any the greatest affair here, to disregard the principal concern of our souls? Do we think ourselves unfit and unworthy to appear in

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God's presence? But is any man unworthy to obey God's commands? Is any man unfit to implore and partake of God's mercy, if he be not unwilling to do it? What unworthiness should hinder us from remembering our Lord's excessive charity towards us, and thanking him for it? from praying for his grace; from resolving to amend our lives? Must we, because we are unworthy, continue so still, by shunning the means of correcting and curing us? Must we increase our unworthiness, by transgressing our duty? If we esteem things well, the conscience of our sinfulness should rather drive us to it, as to our medicine, than detain us from it. There is no man, indeed, who must not conceive and confess himself unworthy; therefore must no man come thither at God's call? If we have a sense of our sins, and a mind to leave them; if we have a sense of God's goodness, and a heart to thank him for it; we are so worthy, that we shall be kindly received there, and graciously rewarded. If we will not take a little care to work these dispositions in us, we are, indeed, unworthy; but the being so, from our own perverse negligence, is a bad excuse for the neglect of our duty. In fine, I dare say, that he who, with an honest meaning, (although with an imperfect devotion,) doth address himself to the performance of this duty, is far more excusable than he that upon whatever score declineth it; no scrupulous shyness can ward us from blame; what then shall we say, if supine sloth, or profane contempt, are the causes of such neglect[c]?

[c] *Ὥσπερ γὰρ τὸ ὡς ἔτυχε προσιέναι, κίνδυνος, οὕτω τὸ μὴ κοινωνεῖν τῶν μυστικῶν δείπνων ἐκείνων, λιμὸς καὶ θάνατος. Αὕτη γὰρ ἡ*

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Thus having briefly despatched the considerations that offered themselves upon these subjects, I shall conclude all with prayer to Almighty God, that we, by his grace and help, believing rightly, strongly, constantly, and finally; being frequent and fervent in prayer, and all pious devotion; sincerely obeying all God's commandments; continuing orderly, dutiful, and worthy members of Christ's Church, growing continually in grace, by the worthy participation of the holy Sacraments, may obtain the end of our faith, the success of our prayers, the reward of our obedience, the continuance in that holy society, the perfect consummation of grace in the possession of eternal joy, glory, and bliss; which God in his infinite mercy grant to us, for our blessed Saviour's sake; to whom be all glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

τράπεζα τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν τὰ νεῦρα, τῆς διανοίας ὁ σύνδεσμος, τῆς παῤῥησίας ἡ ὑπόθεσις, ἡ ἐλπὶς, ἡ σωτηρία, τὸ φῶς, ἡ ζωή.—Chrys. in 1 Cor. Hom. XXIV. [Opp. Tom. III. p. 401.]

Mens deficit, quam non recepta Eucharistia erigit et accendit. —Cyp. Ep. LIV. [Opp. p. 78.]

END OF VOL. VII.

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